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THE
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OR,

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THE GRAY HUNTER

CHAPTER I.

THE GRAY HUNTER AND THE STORM-WAIF.

THE sun had come out clear and warm, after a severe and protracted "norther."

There were a few clouds of mist floating in the air, or creeping sluggishly up the mountain sides, and they were thickest and most sluggish about the top of a tall peak, the tallest of a range of high, volcanic hills to the east of the Rio Grande.

As the mist rose, an old man made his appearance on the peak, standing on a flat rock that projected out from the mountain side, affording a good view of the surrounding country.

Below and on each side of him was the mountain range, tossed into rugged and gigantic heaps, as if by some terrific convulsion of nature, in the days when there was no man to record such phenomena.

Toward the west was a vast and arid plain, treeless, except for stunted palmillas, and devoid of grass and water—the terrible Jornada del Muerto. Beyond this plain the course of the Del Norte could be guessed at, rather than seen, and on the other side of the river was another long stretch of plain, beyond which the vague outlines of the Sierra Madre lay like banks of cloud against the sky.

The entire scene—rugged mountain ranges, desert plains, and stretches of monotonous distances, unvaried by any object upon which the eye might love to rest—were wild and desolate in the extreme; and the man who stood on the broad, flat rock was in keeping with his surroundings.

At the first glance one could not doubt that he was an old man ; but a second look would convey the impression that he was not as old as he appeared to be. The aspect of great age was given him by his long gray hair, that fell in silvery masses upon his shoulders, and by his heavy white beard, that rested like a snow-bank on his broad breast. His deeply-bronzed complexion, his prominent cheek-bones, and his aquiline nose, might easily have caused him to be mistaken for an Indian, and the illusion would have been aided by his piercing dark eyes, that contrasted vividly with his shaggy white eyebrows.

His dress was composed entirely of skins, from which the hair had not been removed ; and yet, these garments, rude as they were, showed taste and harmony and neatness, that spoke of refinement in the man, either as a remembrance of some better existence, or as inherited from a refined ancestry. He was armed with a heavy rifle, which he held by the barrel with his right hand, the butt resting on the ground, and a hunting-knife and a short ax were stuck in his belt.

Near him was an Indian or half-breed boy, some fifteen or sixteen years old, wrapped in a blanket, and squatting on the rock, with his hands clasped over his knees. His dark eyes were raised reverently toward the white-haired man, and again bent upon the wild scene below.

"It is over," said the old man, as he laid down his rifle and stretched out his arms toward the plains. "The Gray Hunter has said, Peace ! and the winds have crept back to their caverns in the hills, and the demons that spit out the snow and sleet and hail have fled in affright to the white tops of the mountains. The Father of Heat has smiled upon the earth again, and all who are living may rejoice."

As the old man spoke, there was a strange, wild light in his eyes, as if his thoughts were either far above or far below the average of human reason.

The Indian boy evidently considered him a supernatural being ; for he looked up at him with his face full of awe and admiration, and spoke to him in tones of the deepest reverence :

"Can the Gray Hunter tell what has become of Corono

and his warriors? Did they attempt to cross the plains before the norther came?"

"No. The Gray Hunter went to Corono in a dream, when he was camped on the Puerco, and told him that he must stay there and get meat for his journey. He and his warriors were in shelter when the storm came, and they are still far from the jornada. But I have seen that which has troubled me. There is some one dead or dying on the plain."

"Is it true, then, that the Gray Hunter sees with the eyes of the birds, and that the winds come and tell him what they learn as they sweep over the land?"

"I have seen what I have told you. Come with me, Chicco, and you will know that I have spoken the truth."

They descended the rugged side of the mountain together, the old man leading the way. Notwithstanding his apparent age and feebleness, his step was light and firm, and he leaped from rock to rock with an agility almost equal to that of his youthful follower. It was hardly more than half an hour from the time of commencing the descent, when they reached the foot of the hill.

The hard and sandy ground of the plain was covered with a light coating of snow and sleet and hail, that crackled under their feet as they walked briskly toward the north; but the warm rays of the sun were rapidly melting this covering, and it was trickling away in little rivulets that were soon absorbed by the thirsty soil.

They had walked but a short distance from the foot of the hill, when they heard the whinny of a horse, and a little further on they caught sight of the animal. It was a splendid black mare, that showed no disposition to avoid them, but continued to whinny and to crop the scanty herbage until they came up to it. They then perceived that it was caparisoned with a costly side-saddle, on one horn of which hung the remnant of a dark riding-skirt.

Motioning to Chicco to take care of the horse, the Gray Hunter went on toward a white object which his keen eyes had descried at a little distance from the horse.

It was a woman, a young and beautiful white woman, with blue eyes that were set as if in death, and with long, fair hair, glistening with diamond drops of sleet and hail. Her face

was as white as the snow, and as clear as the ice that covered her garments, and she was, to all appearance, dead—froze to death.

The old man kneeled down and felt her wrist; but there was no pulse. There was no sign of breath, and the most delicate ear could not detect a heart-beat. He raised one of her arms; it was lifeless, but not rigid, and a ray of hope lighted up his countenance.

He tenderly removed her shoes and stockings, and directed the boy to tether the horse and come to his assistance. Pouring out some liquid from a gourd that was slung at his side, he bathed her face with it, and then, aided by Chicco, briskly rubbed her hands and feet with the same, stopping every now and then to moisten her lips with the contents of the gourd. At last, when a few drops of the liquid had trickled down her throat, there was a slight tremor in her limbs, and a quivering in her lips. The friction was continued more vigorously than before, and a few more drops of the liquid were administered, when her eyes closed and opened, and her pulse was plainly perceptible. Her breath came with a deep sigh, and her countenance was again and again convulsed in the extremest agony. But these paroxysms passed away, as the blood again ran freely in its natural channels, and she opened her large blue eyes, and looked about her in wonder.

“Where is Fred?” she asked, faintly. “Where is cousin Pierre? Is the storm over? What does this mean?”

“We are your friends,” replied the old man. “There are none others near you. You have been nearly frozen to death and I must take you to a place of shelter.”

She shuddered as she saw the dark faces and wild forms of the old man and the boy; but the sound of her own language, and the gentle tone in which it was spoken, reassured her, and she muttered a feeble “Thank you.”

The horse was brought, and the old man lifted her gently into the saddle, placing Chicco behind for the purpose of holding her, while he led the horse toward the sierra.

He did not ascend the mountain by the rough and precipitous course that he and the boy had taken in their descent, but went further toward the south, where a path led up into a ravine that formed a sort of pass through the hills. The

ravine became steeper after a while, and was so choked by masses of rock as to be almost impassable ; but the horse was sure-footed and carefully led, and the ascent was slowly but safely accomplished.

They came out at the summit of a portion of the sierra that was considerably lower than the peak from which the old man and the boy had descended to the plains. Here the top of the mountain widened for a little space, and was comparatively level, with a clear and nearly circular lake in the middle, which the volcanic rocks inclosed like a cup, or the crater of some lesser Vesuvius of forgotten ages. About this singular lake was a fair growth of trees and underbrush, giving a pleasant and picturesque appearance to the location, which was rendered all the more pleasant by the desolation that met the view in every other direction.

At the southern end of the lake, if it could be said to have an end, was a large lodge, made of skins stretched upon poles, evidently erected for a temporary purpose. Here the Gray Hunter stopped, and the young lady, who had been nearly in a stupor during the ascent of the mountain, was lifted from the horse and carried within the lodge.

The old man bestirred himself, and made a hot tea of some dried herbs with which the lodge was plentifully garnished, and persuaded her to drink it, after she had swallowed a little of the liquid from his gourd. A gentle perspiration was the result of this treatment, and she lay back on her couch of dried grass and buffalo-robcs, and was soon sleeping peacefully.

The sun had set when she awoke, and on the grass in front of the lodge, was spread the evening meal, consisting of broiled antelope-steaks, luscious fish and corn-cakes, with water from an ice-cold spring near the lake. As she was very hungry, she willingly allowed the old man to lead her to this repast, and she felt that she was not among heathens or enemies, when he bowed his head and asked a blessing in English.

When she had finished her supper, she was sufficiently refreshed and strong enough to answer readily the questions that the Gray Hunter was anxious to ask.

She had been journeying to Santa Fe, she said, with a caravan that belonged to her father's cousin and her guardian,

who was named Pierre Cartier. Just before sunset a terrible storm from the north had set in, with driving snow and sleet. A number of horses had stampeded, among them her own, from which she had not dismounted. She remembered a feeble and fruitless effort to check the runaway, a wild gallop through the storm, and nothing more.

She went on to say, in answer to further questioning, that she was an orphan, that she had lately resided near Santa Fe and that her name was Emilie Latourette.

The Gray Hunter pressed his hand against his brow, and his expression was one of bewilderment, almost of stupefaction.

"Latourette! Latourette!" he said, musingly. "That name seems to waken an echo in my brain. Have the birds whispered it to me, or has it come to me in a dream?"

CHAPTER II.

THE NORTHER.

A LARGE wagon-train, with a number of led and driven horses, was crossing the Rio Grande from the west to the east bank. As the animals toiled through the muddy water, dragging the teams over the sandy bottom of the stream, three persons were stationed on the west bank, mounted on fine horses, watching the slow movements of the caravan.

One of these was Pierre Cartier, the owner of the train, a wealthy trader of New Mexico, who had been as far west as the sources of the Gila, leaving supplies of goods at various stations for Indian traders, and was returning with a quantity of robes and furs and a valuable lot of horses.

In person Pierre Cartier was a man apparently fifty years of age, short and inclined to be fat, full-faced and unctuous, with small eyes and thin lips, and with a nose that not only turned slightly upward at the end, but also had a decided inclination toward his left cheek. He was remarkably smooth-spoken and polite, and would always have left a good im-

pression upon strangers, had it not been that he wore an ugly frown when he was displeased, and that his displeasure invariably communicated itself to his nose, giving a purplish tinge to the end of that organ, and causing a slight convulsive twitching of the cartilage—all of which was quite unpleasant at times.

Another of the three was Emilie Latourette, the orphan daughter of Pierre Cartier's cousin, formerly a trader between Mexico and the United States, who had been lost on one of his expeditions, and was supposed to have been killed by the Indians. Rumor had it that Cartier had been comparatively a poor man until the death of his cousin, but had been able, since he became the guardian of the orphan, to launch out into extensive speculations, in all of which he seemed to have been successful.

Emilie was not quite seventeen, and was a blonde, with eyes the color of the sky, and with a mass of silken and shining gold-brown hair, that was the envy of the women and the admiration of the men. Quiet and amiable and docile as she usually appeared to be, she had a will of her own, and was possessed of energy and courage and endurance that needed only to be developed and strengthened by circumstances.

She had made this journey with her cousin, as she called Pierre Cartier, for the sake of health and recreation, as the train was a large one, and there could be no possible danger connected with the expedition.

The third person in the group was Fred Marne, a young gentleman who had gone to California in the early days of the mining excitement, and who had worked manfully with pick and shovel and cradle, until he had accumulated what he believed to be his share of the gold-dust. He had wisely invested the greater part of his earnings in rising real estate, and had then determined to travel, for the purpose of seeing the country, keeping an eye out, in the meantime, for business, in the way of prospecting for placers and mineral lands. He had overtaken Mr. Cartier's party a few days before it reached the Rio Grande. As he was a man of capital, with letters to prominent business men in Santa Fe, he was favorably received by Mr. Cartier, and had already gained the res

pect and confidence of Emilie Latourette. With him had come Bob Riley, generally known as Captain Bob, a Texan frontiersman, who had commanded a party of rangers in the ceaseless wars with the Comanches and Kioways. Having been "cleaned out" in California, Captain Bob had become disgusted with that style of civilization, and had gladly accepted Fred Marne's offer to accompany him on his tour.

Pierre Cartier and his two companions crossed the river after the train had passed over, and then the former rode forward to give directions concerning the route, leaving Fred Marne and Emilie to follow slowly in the rear. They appeared to be well satisfied with this arrangement, as they were absorbed in conversation and in no hurry to catch up with the caravan.

They were a mile or so from the river, when Marne noticed that the temperature of the atmosphere had suddenly grown cooler.

"Can it be possible that we are going to have a norther?" he said. "Have you noticed the change in the air, Miss Latourette?"

"It is quite cool," replied Emilie, as she covered her shoulders with a shawl that she carried on her saddle.

Captain Bob Riley came riding back to them—a tall, broad shouldered, bronzed and heavy-bearded man, mounted on a powerful horse, which he reined up by the side of Marne.

"We are going to have a norther," he said.

"I was just speaking of it," replied Fred. "Is there any doubt about it?"

"Not a bit. It will be a snorter, sure's you're born."

Marne looked with apprehension at Emilie, whose light shawl did not prevent her from shivering. He took his own blanket, that was buckled to his saddle, and added it to her covering.

"You had better speak to Mr. Cartier," he said to Captain Riley, "and tell him that there is a norther coming."

"I have told him; but he won't stop. He says that he means to keep on until he comes to a camping place."

"That will never do. The storm will soon be on us, and we should prepare for it at once. Please excuse me, Miss Latourette, and I will ride forward with Captain Riley, and

try to persuade Mr. Cartier to call a halt. I will soon return."

Fred Marne and Riley went at full speed to the head of the train, where they found Pierre Cartier, and represented to him the danger of going further, as it was evident that a norther would soon be upon them. Cartier admitted that the symptoms of a storm were plain enough, but declared his intention of going a little further, to a camping-place with which he was acquainted.

"It is only a few hundred yards," he said—"just at the edge of the hill yonder. We can get there in half an hour, and then we will be sheltered by the hill."

"But we will have no half-hour," urged Marne. "We ought already to be on the ground and prepared for the storm. It will be on us in a few minutes. It is here now!"

"Even as he spoke, the wind rushed from the north with such violence as nearly to sweep them from their horses, and so cold as to cut them to the bone. Before they could recover from the shock of this fierce attack, the sky was shut from view by a lead-colored cloud, and the air was filled with driving snow, against which it was impossible to ride or walk.

Mr. Cartier at once dismounted, calling to his men, and hastily began to take care of the wagons and the animals; but the effort was too late to be of any real service, and the men soon discovered that it would be as much as they could do to protect themselves.

The snow quickly became sleet, freezing the clothes to the backs of the men, and covering the horses and mules with a coating of ice.

Then the sleet changed to hail, with hailstones as large as hazel-nuts, that struck the animals like the blow of whips, causing them to rear and plunge, to dart forward, and to run wildly in all directions, heedless of all attempts to restrain them.

In a few moments there was a stampede of the greater part of the train, the led and driven animals first rushing frantically toward the south, and the biped portion of the caravan sheltering themselves as well as they could, with

wagons, blankets, saddles, and such other articles as were at hand.

As soon as Mr. Cartier gave the order to dismount, Fred Marne turned to ride back to the rear, to look after the safety of Emilie Latourette. He had hardly started, when the sleet came upon him, quickly followed by the hail. His horse, a young and fiery animal, was so pelted by the icy missiles, that he became unmanageable, and started off, at full speed, at right angles to the course that Marne desired to pursue. When his rider finally checked his career, he reared and plunged so violently, that it was useless to attempt to remain upon his back, and Marne was glad to be able to dismount.

With considerable difficulty he succeeded in removing the saddle, and the horse, freed from control, ran a little further, then turned tail to the storm, and did not stir from that position.

Marne was unable to see twenty steps from where he was standing, and could not guess in what direction he was from the train. In this position it was useless for him to move, except to protect himself from the cold and the pelting hail. After wrapping the saddle-blanket around his body, he rolled himself into a ball on the ground, covered his head with the saddle, and resigned himself to the discomfort and danger of his situation.

The storm lasted more than twelve hours. It commenced just before sunset, and it was after sunrise the next morning when it ceased. When the sun shone out, it found the greater part of the animals belonging to the train stampeded, some of them dead, and others unable to move. Some of the men were badly frost-bitten, and all were in such a condition of numbness and exhaustion, that it was some time before they were able to do the needed work.

Fred Marne bestirred himself as soon as possible, saddled and mounted his horse, which had not strayed far during the storm, and hastened to the train to offer his assistance to Mr. Cartier.

Although he did not suppose that Emilie Latourette had fared worse than the rest of the party, he felt uneasy about her, and his first inquiries were concerning her. He learned,

to his great consternation, that she was nowhere visible about the camp, and that no one had seen her since the commencement of the storm.

A careful search was made at and about the stopping-place of the train; but neither Emilie nor her horse was to be found. Parties were sent out to collect the scattered animals, some of which had run many miles before stopping. All that were able to travel were finally brought in; but Emilie's horse was not among them, nor had any track or trace of her been seen.

When the men had had their breakfast, and the stock had been fed, Mr. Cartier went to the head of the train, and was about to order an advance, when Fred Marne rode up and asked him if he did not intend to wait and make a further search for Miss Latourette.

There was a dark frown on the trader's face; but it was impossible to decide whether it was caused by grief for the loss of his niece, or by displeasure at Marne's interference.

"Nothing more can be done," he replied. "We have scoured all the country about here, and she is not to be found."

"But she must be somewhere," insisted Fred.

"Her body is somewhere, no doubt; but there is not the remotest possibility that she has survived the storm. It is probable that her horse stampeded at the first, and that he never stopped running as long as he could keep his feet. If she was not thrown and killed, she has undoubtedly been frozen to death.

"You speak very coolly about it."

"Why should I not? We should look facts in the face, and we can always do better by keeping cool than by getting excited. I am not a man to rave and tear my hair because of a misfortune that could not have been foreseen, and that can not now be remedied."

"It seems possible to me that she may have lived through the storm. The rest of us are alive, and I know that she was well wrapped in a heavy blanket."

"It is out of the question. A girl on a wild horse, rushing headlong through the night and such a tempest! If the horse threw her and broke her neck, it was the most merci-

ful thing that could happen to her. It would be useless ever to search for her remains. If we should chance to find them, it would only be to learn that the coyotes or Apaches had been there before us."

"You are determined, then, to go on without making any further effort to find Miss Latourette?"

"I shall continue my journey, and I am sure that I know my duty better than you can teach it to me."

"Very well, sir. I leave you to settle the matter with your own conscience. I shall turn back and search for the young lady."

Fred Marne and Mr. Cartier parted very coolly, the former, with Bob Riley, taking a southerly direction, and the latter leading his train toward Santa Fe.

CHAPTER III.

AN UNWELCOME VISITOR.

Two years after the loss of his ward in the north, Pierre Cartier was living at a beautiful place of his own, near El Paso.

By the liberal use of money and the water of the river, a sandy and rocky spot of ground had been converted into a paradise, and the desert had been literally made to blossom as the rose. Within a high wall that had been built as a protection against the Indians, who frequently extended their excursions to the outskirts of the town, was a large garden, filled with the finest fruits and flowers and shade-trees, intersected in all directions by miniature irrigating canals, through which the water of the river trickled and rippled, refreshing the air, and giving a wonderful growth to the verdurous masses that loaded the earth.

The house was not in consonance with the natural beauty of the place, being an unsightly structure of adobes, built with the view of affording defense against Indian attacks, and with an eye neither to beauty nor convenience. It was, however,

elegantly and sumptuously furnished, its inside being as attractive as its outside was repulsive.

Mr. Cartier appeared to have been prospered in a worldly point of view; but his prosperity had not been without its drawbacks. Within a year after the disappearance of his ward, he had lost his wife and only child by death, and he was now a lonely man, with no one to share his grandeur but his servants and a woman who officiated as housekeeper, and who, it was hinted, sustained to him a closer and less lawful relation.

The day was drawing near its close, when he was seated under a shade-tree near the mansion, smoking a cigarrita, and watching the play of a small fountain surrounded by flowers. The woman, Pepita, was in sight under the veranda of the house, employed with some light needle-work.

A servant brought him a card, and said that the gentleman who presented it was waiting at the outer gate.

Cartier frowned as he read the name on the card—"Fred W. Marne"—but ordered that the stranger should be admitted.

Fred Marne's reception was by no means cordial. Cartier had nearly forgotten him, and this reminder of his existence was not pleasant. The two men had parted on frigid terms, and nothing had occurred to make their meeting less icy. The young man increased the unpleasantness by his first remark, which had reference to the terrible norther in which Emilie Latourette was lost. The trader replied carelessly, and seemed desirous of avoiding the subject; but Marne pressed it.

"Have you ever heard of Miss Latourette?" he asked.

"How should I? I have been neither to heaven nor to hell. I have had no communication whatever with the other world."

"I thought it possible—"

"That she might be living? The subject is exhausted, sir, and I wish to hear no more of it. You sought her. Did you find her?"

"I did not."

"You ought to be satisfied, then, and you need not annoy me any further."

"But I found traces of her—such as led me to believe that she had survived the storm, that she was living the next-day."

"And what then?"

"If she was alive, I concluded that she must be in the power of Indians, as the hills near which I found the traces were full of Apaches. They drove me away, when I attempted to make a further search, and I barely escaped with my life. I have not been able to make another effort, until now."

"And now?"

"Now I intend to seek her until I find her, if she still lives, and I have come to you, supposing that you will be glad to co-operate in the enterprise. The outfit will not be very costly; but a strong party of good and reliable men will be needed."

Cartier laughed—a dry, sardonic laugh—and lighted another cigarrita.

"Are you so silly as to suppose," he said, "that I will squander my money on such a wild-goose-chase? If I chose to organize such a ridiculous expedition, do you suppose that I would intrust its management to an irresponsible adventurer?"

Fred Marne's face flushed; but his temper was under control.

"If you have property in your possession," he said, "belonging to Miss Latourette, it would be no more than reasonable to use a portion of it for her benefit."

"You are again mistaken, if you suppose that I have any property in my possession that belongs to dead people. At the death of Miss Latourette, the property that would have been hers became mine, as next of kin to my deceased cousin, Felix Latourette."

"You have sufficient reason, then, for believing her to be dead, and for being blind or deaf to proof that she may be living."

"Do you wish to insult me, sir?" exclaimed Cartier, starting up in a rage.

"By no means—no more than you wished to insult me when you called me an adventurer. I have offered you the privilege of sharing the expense of the expedition I propose, because I wished to give you a chance to compromise with your conscience, if you have any. You have thrown away that chance, and I warn you that you will yet be called to

account, both for the life of your ward and for her property. As for myself, I need no help. I will make the search with my own men and at my own expense."

Cartier looked around, more than half inclined to call the servants and order them to eject his visitor forcibly from the premises; but Marne appeared like a man who was not to be trifled with, as he walked leisurely away toward the entrance to the grounds.

When Fred Marne was let out at the gate, and the gate was shut behind him, he looked around as if he was expecting to see somebody. There were two saddled horses near by, and there was but one man to ride them. The other rider could not be far away.

There was a rustling on top of the wall, and a man jumped down on the outside.

"Where have you been, Captain Bob?" asked Fred. "What were you doing up there on the wall?"

"I have been inside."

"You told me you would stay here and watch the horses."

"The horses didn't need any looking after, and you did. I don't trust those Dons near as far as I can see them, and I knew that they had you at a disadvantage in there. You made that old cuss powerful mad, and it's a wonder that he didn't call up some of his yellow-skinned gang and have you rubbed out. If he had tried it, I reckon we would have saved a few of them."

"I had my eye on him, Bob, and he would have been the first to go under. I said nothing more to him than he deserved."

"That's true enough. I believe the old wretch was glad to get rid of the girl, and that he wouldn't be willing to bring her to life on any terms. There is quite a difference between you and him on that point, Fred."

"Yes; I want to find her, and he don't."

"I thought that she had a sort of a liking for you."

"What do you mean by that?"

"I can see through the hole in a millstone as well as any other man. When a girl takes a liking for a young man, there's apt to be a pair of them, and your liking is coming out pretty strong just now. That's what I think about it."

"I can't hinder your thoughts, Bob. Whether you are right or not, I mean to find the young lady if she is alive, and I can't help believing that she is alive. What do you think about that?"

"I am willing to swear that she was not killed by that storm. It is likely the Indians got her. If they did, why then—"

"What then?"

"The fewer hopes you have, the less likely you will be to be disappointed."

"I shall go into the search without any hopes, but with plenty of determination."

"That's the style. Stick to that, and I will stick to you. The first thing to be done is to choose our men and make up our party."

CHAPTER IV.

MORE VISITORS.

It was not half an hour after Marne and Bob Riley rode away when there came another visitor to Pierre Cartier's place.

The new-comer was a young Indian, whose half-naked body was shining with oil, and whose scanty garments were tricked out with barbaric finery. His eyes were as black and wild as those of a hawk, and on his head he wore the eagle-feathers of a chief. In his right hand he carried a lance; but a rifle was slung at his back, and two pistols were stuck in the sash that held his knife.

The warrior reined up his horse at the gate that led into the grounds, and uttered a cry that brought several of the servants running to him. At a word from him, they threw the gate wide open, and he rode proudly to where the owner of the mansion was seated.

This happened at a time when the Comanches were "*en paz*" with the people of El Paso, when they had graciously consented to a truce, in order that they might come to the set-

lements and sell their furs and medicinal herbs, receiving in exchange blankets and guns and powder and lead, with which they would open another sort of business when the bloodthirsty fit should come on them again. This sort of thing was allowed by the silly Mexicans, who never learned any thing by experience, and never got tired of paying dearly for their folly.

Pierre Cartier did not seem to recognize his visitor; but rose and greeted him, and asked what he wanted.

"I have come from the Gray Hunter," replied the warrior, "to get the two white robes for the White Spirit."

"The Gray Hunter, whoever he may be, has sent a new messenger this time."

"Corono is a great chief. He has come for the robes because he wishes to carry them with his own hands to the White Spirit. Are they ready?"

"They are not. Either the chief has come too soon, or time has passed more swiftly than I thought. The robes are not yet made."

A heavy frown sat on the brow of the young chief.

"This is not as it should be," he said. "You have a fine lodge here, and every thing is beautiful about it; but, if I shall speak the word, my warriors would burn and destroy it in a little while, and your scalp would dry in Apache smoke. If you give us what you have promised, you shall be safe. If you do not, you will be sorry that you ever lied to an Apache."

"The robes will soon be made," said Cartier, whose countenance showed that the words of the warrior had frightened him. "I had not supposed that the time had come."

"It is near the ninth moon, and the time has passed. You may send them, as soon as they are ready, with the guns and powder and other articles, to El Perillo, and I will be there, with some of my warriors, to receive them. When we wish any horses, you shall be notified in time; but we do not need any now."

Cartier invited his visitor to remain and eat and drink with him; but Corono proudly declined the offer, and rode away as he had come. His demeanor during the interview had been that of a sovereign demanding tribute from an in-

ferior. Cartier had been galled by his manner, but knew better than to resent it, as his property was at the mercy of the proud Apache. For all protection that he could expect to receive from El Paso, he might as well be in the heart of the wilderness, and he had no alternative but submission to the insolence of the savage, as well as to his extortion.

When Carono had left the grounds, Pepita drew her seat near to Cartier, and gazed at him with her searching eyes.

"What does this mean?" she asked. "But you need not tell me. I will think, and perhaps I can guess its meaning. Twice a year you must give the Indians two white robes for the White Spirit. What can the White Spirit be but a woman, and a white woman at that? The American who was here believes that your ward is living, and that she is among the Indians. Shall I add this to that? It tells me that the White Spirit is the lost Emilie Latourette, and that you know it."

"What nonsense you talk, Pepita! Nothing could be more ridiculous. I know nothing about the White Spirit. The white robes are only a part of the tribute I pay for being left unmolested. If the White Spirit is really Emilie Latourette, why does she not come and claim her home?"

"Perhaps the Indians will not allow her to leave them. Perhaps, if it was not for fear of the Indians, you would put her where she would be sure never to trouble you again. You need not be afraid that I will interfere with you. I attend to nobody's business but my own, and I only wanted to know the truth."

"I hope you are satisfied with the work of your imagination."

"I only wanted to know the truth, and I am satisfied. I have nothing to do with your plans and intrigues. There is some one else at the gate. You are lucky in having visitors this evening, Pierre Cartier."

"Or unlucky—that remains to be seen," said Cartier, as he arose to get a view of the new-comer.

This stranger, who had left his horse at the gate, was attired in the undress uniform of an officer of the Mexican army, and his manner befitted his appearance, which was showy and pretentious.

He introduced himself as Colonel Chavala, accepted the seat that Mr. Cartier offered him and began to converse, with the tone and air of a man who knew what he was talking about, concerning the state of affairs in Mexico and on the borders of the republic. His intimate acquaintance with the prominent men who were then fighting in Mexico, and his knowledge of the intrigues in progress among ambitious Generals and their factions, were highly interesting to Cartier, who listened to him with pleasure and great respect.

"May I ask whether you have come into this region on official business?" inquired the trader, when there was a temporary stoppage in the flow of Chavala's talk.

"I have not. I have no longer any official position. I resigned my rank, because I could no longer serve under a weak Government, and be domineered over by sycophants and traitors. Besides, I have had enough of glory, and must now pay attention to the commands of my pocket."

"You are right, colonel. With a full pocket we have every thing; but glory that does not fill the pocket is not worth having."

"I have experienced the truth of what you say. If I had been willing to betray my country, or to sacrifice the interests of the people to my own, I would now be a wealthy man. As it is, I am a poor devil, determined to make some great stroke for wealth, at whatever expense of brain or body. How I envy you, a rich and solid man, settled here in this sweet seclusion, with nothing to trouble you but the care of your immense revenues."

Mr Cartier shook his head sadly.

"Those immense revenues," he said, "are no longer visible, if they ever existed. I have lately had many heavy losses, and can now scarcely support myself in the style to which I have been accustomed. I feel as you do, that I would be glad to make a grand stroke for fortune, and that I would risk much to replace myself on my former footing."

"Indeed! I would not have supposed it possible that Señor Cartier could feel the need of money. If you are really in earnest, I think I can tell you how to make a grand stroke."

"You will find me willing to listen to any reasonable proposition, if there is money to be gained by it."

"You are acquainted with the Organos mountains, I suppose, and with the Sierra Blanca."

"I know where they are. I have seen them often enough, but have never tried to penetrate their fastnesses. They are the hiding-places of Apaches, and it is dangerous to go near them."

"It is not long since I went all through those sierras."

"You have been through them, and you are alive!"

"As you perceive. I have seen the wonderful lake in the Organos, where the tide rises and falls, and I have seen a greater wonder than that. I will begin at the beginning, so that you may understand the story I have to tell. But we are not alone."

Cartier motioned to Pepita, who arose and left them.

"There was a soldier in my regiment from Chihuahua," resumed Chavala. "A man who had seen much of the Apaches and other tribes of the Indios Bravos. He was mortally wounded in a fight with bandits, and I nursed him and tried to prolong his life. When it was plain that he could not be saved, I exerted myself to make his transit into the other world as easy as possible. He was grateful to me for my kindness, and told me a secret with his last breath.

"This secret was known only to himself and one other person, a man of El Paso, named Castellar. They had sworn to each other that neither would tell it, unless upon his death-bed, and then only to a man in whom he could trust, and who would swear not to betray it."

"Surely, colonel, you do not propose to betray such a secret to me," remarked Cartier.

"Your wit is keen, Señor Cartier. If I do make it known to you, you may be sure that it is with the consent of the other party in interest. My soldier and his friend, Castellar, were going from El Paso to the north, on a hunting expedition, when they were chased by Apaches, and were forced to take refuge in the mountains. The savages followed them; but they eluded the pursuit, and kept themselves concealed until their enemies had left the neighborhood.

"It was while they were hiding from the Apaches that they discovered a great wonder—nothing less than a huge placer, or several placers, filled with gold in dust and scales and nuggets. There is untold wealth in those placers, and there are ledges of quartz rock that will yield a fabulous percentage of gold."

"I am afraid, colonel, that your soldier was romancing. If one should go to the hills and seek those marvelous placers, they could not be found."

"But they have been found. Did I not say that I had been into those hills? I have seen the placers and the quartz ledges with my own eyes. Soon after the death of the soldier, I left the army, and went at once to El Paso, where I was so fortunate as to find Castellar. I told him how I had become possessed of the secret, and he confirmed the story of the soldier in every particular. They had never made any use of the secret, for several reasons. The Indians were a great obstacle in the way of getting the treasure. They were unwilling to reveal the existence of the gold, or to form a company to go in search of it, until they could find parties whom they could trust to divide fairly and not cheat or rob them of their shares. Before they had succeeded in finding such parties, they became separated, and neither could act without the other. Then the soldier died, and I took his place."

Mr. Cartier mused a few moments, and was evidently not quite satisfied with the explanation.

"The original parties appear to have been very careful in guarding their secret," he said; "but you disclose it, at first sight, to a man with whom you have had no previous acquaintance, of whom you can not be supposed to know any thing. This is hardly consistent, Colonel Chavala."

"Pardon me, señor. Permit me to finish my statement, and you will see that you are mistaken. Accompanied by Castellar, I went to the hills, and saw the placers and the ledges, and brought away specimens of the gold and of the ore, some of which I will shortly show to you. As we were fully determined to make use of the secret, we were agreed that we only wanted a man of capital to join us. You were well known to me by reputation, and we believed you to be

the very man for the purpose. Your present embarrassments were familiar to me, and there was good reason to suppose that you would gladly connect yourself with the enterprise. You will perceive that I have not acted blindly or thoughtlessly in speaking of this matter to you, as I came here for that special purpose."

Chavala then produced specimens of gold-dust and scales and nuggets, together with pieces of quartz that showed an unusual proportion of the precious metal. These he laid before the longing eyes of the trader, and they formed his final and convincing argument.

"The Indians are in the way," objected Cartier. "Those mountains are full of Apaches, and they will not let a white man come near them."

"The stories about the Indians have been greatly exaggerated," replied Chavala. "They have themselves spread those reports, for the purpose of frightening away the whites. They have sense enough to perceive that if the presence of gold in the mountains should become known, they would soon be overrun by white people. There were few if any Indians in the Organos when I was there. I have not the slightest doubt that a strong party, well armed, could establish themselves in the mountains and carry on mining operations as long as they should choose to do so."

As objection after objection was removed, the scheme found more favor with Pierre Cartier, and Chavala accepted his invitation to spend the night at his hacienda. In the morning the details of the gold-hunting expedition were arranged, and Chavala went away, promising to return within a week.

CHAPTER V.

CORONO'S WOOING.

A SKIN lodge was again erected near the wonderful lake on the Organos. There was no spear or shield or plumed head-dress in front of the lodge, to point it out as the abode of a warrior; but on the dressed skins that covered the poles were rudely painted uncouth hieroglyphics, figures of beasts and birds and reptiles, and the insignia of the savage medicine-man or conjuror.

It was about the middle of the afternoon, and near the margin of the lake, on a flat stone, Emilie Latourette was seated in the shade.

Her appearance had changed considerably since she was lost in the norther. She had become a woman, and was mature in mind and in body. The exercise and exposure of her wild life among the Indians had made some change in the style of her beauty, but had in nowise diminished it. The slight tinge of bronze that overspread her cheeks did not detract from the delicacy of her complexion, and she was rendered more fascinating by the air of melancholy that she had acquired during her association with savages, far from all that she had been accustomed to or could care for.

Her only visible garment was a long robe of stainless white, confined at the waist by a buck-skin belt. On her head she wore a circlet of white feathers, and her feet were clad in stout but well-fitting moccasins.

As she sat there musing, dabbling aimlessly in the water with a light wand, the Gray Hunter came out of his lodge, and went toward her. He walked with the aid of a long staff, more from habit than necessity, and muttered half intelligible phrases, as he slowly made his way toward the lake.

Emilie heard him muttering, and turned to look at him. It was without any uneasiness that she noticed his wild eyes and his unsettled manner. She was accustomed to his ways, and

knew that, although his reason had been shattered, he was entirely harmless to her if not to others. To the infirmity of his mind was partly to be attributed his great influence over the Apaches, who believed that a man thus afflicted must have been endowed by the Great Spirit with some supernatural sense that gave him an insight into things unsearchable by ordinary people. In addition to this faculty, or lack of faculty, he enjoyed a reputation that many civilized physicians might have envied, as a healer of wounds and curer of diseases, being acquainted with the medical virtues of all the useful herbs that abounded in the sierras. By his superior intelligence, and by the use of arts that he had borrowed from other medicine-men, he had acquired such an ascendancy over the Indians as made him a power among them, enabling him to be an efficient protector of Emilie Latourette.

He seated himself near Emilie, and gazed at her intently, while she continued to dabble in the water with her wand, and the expression of sadness deepened on her countenance.

"Does my father wish to speak with me?" she asked, when she had thrown the light stick out upon the lake.

"He does. It grieves the Gray Hunter to see the White Spirit so sad, and he would be glad to say or do something that could cheer her. Does she still sorrow for the people of her own race, and for the gay life of the settlements?"

"The Gray Hunter knows that I do, and I have no wish to deny it," she replied. "He has been very kind to me; but it is useless for him to endeavor to make me an Indian. The white people are my people, and it is natural that I should wish to return to them. Whether the life of the settlements may be gay or sad to me, it is the life to which I have been accustomed, and I can not help sorrowing for it."

"Corono loves you, and he is a great chief and a good man. When you marry him, you will love him, and your husband and children will reconcile you to the life that you will lead."

"Does my father know what he is saying? Corono is a brave man, and he has always been kind to me; but I can never be his wife."

"He will have no other wives, and you will not be obliged to do any thing that you do not wish to do."

"Let us say nothing more about it. The subject is so distasteful to me that I can not even speak of it. Allow me to ask you how it is that you, who are a white man, can live so contentedly among the Indians, and endeavor to persuade me to live the same life?"

"Am I a white man? How do you know that?" asked the Gray Hunter, as the stupid look came into his face again.

"You look like an Indian; but I am sure that you are not an Indian. I know it because you differ from the Apaches in so many particulars, because you know so many things that they can not understand, because you speak our language better than any Apache could ever learn it. Was it of your own choice, or by compulsion, that you made your abode among the Indians? I do wish that you would tell me something of your history."

"How do I know? What can I tell? I only know that I am the Gray Hunter. If I was ever any thing else, it has passed from my memory. I remember nothing but the Apaches and the life that I have lived among them, and I have no reason to believe that I am not an Apache. There are shadows on my mind sometimes, that seem almost like memories; but they fade away when I try to grasp them, and I can make nothing of them. A name may bring them up, or a look, or a tone, or some other slight and unnoticed thing, and then it seems that I am about to be carried back into the past; but they are nothing—they only trouble me and disappoint me."

"Do you never feel any desire to leave the Indians and go to the white people?"

"Why should I? I know nothing of them. They are the enemies of the Apaches, and the Apaches are my friends. Could I be a great medicine among the whites? Would any of their chiefs be as kind to me as Corono has been? If White Spirit will be his wife, I will have nothing more to ask for. The chief should come here soon, bringing robes for you from the settlements, and then—"

"And then nothing more, I hope. Let us not speak of Corono; but tell me where those robes are procured."

"When the Apaches began to call you White Spirit, I wished you to have white robes, so that you might be dressed

as suited your name ; but I did not know where I should get them, until Corono told me, in time of peace, that he was collecting tribute from some wealthy men near El Paso, and among them he mentioned the name of Pierre Cartier. I then remembered that that was the name of your cousin and guardian, who had so easily lost you at the time of the norther, and I told Corono that he must make Cartier send me, for the White Spirit, two white robes every six moons."

"The robes, then, come from my cousin. Why can you not let me go to him? I would at least have a home among my own people."

"The White Spirit is much better off with her red friends than she would be with her white enemies. Your guardian has your fortune, and he intends to keep it. Do you not know that he lost you because he wanted to lose you? He might have saved you if he had wished to do so, and he might at least have searched for you ; but he continued his journey as if nothing had happened to distress or displease him."

"I can not believe that he is such a villain. If he knew that I am here, he would try to ransom me from the Apaches."

"He would do nothing of the kind. He does know that you are alive and among the Apaches. He was anxious to be told who and what the White Spirit was, and Corono told him that she was a white girl who had been found near the mountains after a norther. Your cousin could not help knowing, from the story Corono told him, who the white girl was ; but he has never said a word about ransom. If you were now in his power, do you suppose that he would allow you to live? He would soon find a way to get rid of you."

Emilie bowed her head in her hands. The last ray of hope had been withdrawn, and she had no prospect of being able to escape from the Apaches.

Chicco came to the lake, and announced that Corono, with several warriors, was coming up into the mountain, and would soon reach the lodge. Emilie would gladly have made her escape ; but the Gray Hunter would not permit that, and she nerved herself to bear the coming interview, the purpose of which she knew only too well.

Corono soon came in sight ; but he left his warriors behind, and walked to the lake alone.

The Apache chief was a fine-looking man, and he was aware of that fact. He was also a warrior of undoubted bravery, and had a high reputation for skill as well as courage. He was convinced that the Apaches were the greatest nation on the face of the earth, and it followed that he, as one of their chiefs, must be one of the greatest men living. His experience of the white men, having been chiefly confined to the pusillanimous Mexicans, confirmed him in this opinion. And yet, he was not a vain or conceited man, but was proud of his tribe, his position and himself.

He considered it a great honor to any white girl that he should offer to make her his wife, and it surprised him greatly that the White Spirit, upon whom he bestowed that honor, should be unable to appreciate it. He would have used harsh measures to secure her consent, if he had not been prevented by the influence of Gray Hunter, who, while professedly favoring Corono's suit, had gained time for Emilie, until the chief declared that he would no longer be trifled with, that she should become his wife without any more delay.

He was in this mood when he approached the shore of the lake, where Gray Hunter and Emilie were seated.

Quite gracefully he presented Emilie with the robes that he had brought from El Paso, and added a well-turned compliment to her beauty, his look bringing the blush to her cheek, rather than the words he spoke. He then seated himself on the ground, and began to converse with Gray Hunter concerning his visit to El Paso, the movements of his warriors, and other matters of interest to the tribe. He gave a vivid description of Mr. Cartier's place near El Paso, and enumerated the weapons and other articles of value that he had received as tribute from that gentleman.

At this stage Emilie became deeply interested in the conversation, and could not refrain from manifesting her excitement and curiosity.

"That man is my cousin," she said. "He is the only relative I have left in the world. Does he know that I am here?"

"I suppose not," replied Corono. "If he should know it, what would happen?"

“He might try to ransom me, or to set me free in some way.”

“Not while Coronno is living.”

“If you go there again, will you not let me go with you? If I could only see him and speak to him once more, it would be such a blessing!”

“When you go there, you go as the wife of a great chief. I have come here for the purpose of making you my wife and I will wait no longer. I will listen no more to the words of the Gray Hunter, who has put me off during so many moons. The White Spirit must now be my wife, and tomorrow I will take her to my lodge. Let her be ready. Coronno is a great chief. He has spoken, and he must be obeyed.”

Having thus delivered his ultimatum, the Apache went away, refusing the invitation of the old man to enter the lodge, and camped with his warriors on another part of the mountain.

It was now dark, and Emilie hastened to prepare the evening meal for the old man and herself. She ate her share of it in silence, and scarcely ever looked at Gray Hunter, who, for his part, seemed unable to keep his eyes from her face. He felt sure that she was revolving some scheme in her mind, although he could not guess what it might be, and he had good reason to suppose that it was connected with Coronno's declared intention of making her his wife immediately. He endeavored to draw her into conversation on the subject; but she was so heedless and abstracted, that he soon abandoned the attempt, and let her alone.

The scheme that Emilie was revolving had little reason to commend it to her adoption, but was simply an impulse of desperation. She knew that the chief was in earnest in what he said, and that he meant to make her his wife. She also knew that she was powerless to prevent him from carrying his purpose into effect, and that the influence of Gray Hunter could no longer be exerted in her favor. Coronno was settled in his determination, and would be inexorable.

She could see no choice but death or degradation. She had no objection to the Apache chief, as an Indian; but she could not endure the thought of becoming his wife. Such

an alliance seemed so hideous to her, that she could not even think about it.

There was but one course left to her; she could make an attempt to escape; and that would only be one mode of committing suicide. She would inevitably lose her way, would be unable to supply herself with provisions, and would fall a prey either to starvation or to wild beasts. In either event she would have a horrible death, and she could not help thinking that it would be easier to find an eternal refuge from trouble at the bottom of the lake. But she was not cowardly enough to resort to suicide, and she felt that hope would never leave her while she could cling to life.

This was what she was revolving in her mind while the Gray Hunter gazed at her in silence, and she had fully determined upon the course she should pursue, before he lay down to rest. Happen what might, she would make a resolute attempt to escape. Any fate would be preferable to existence as the wife of a savage.

When the old man had gone to sleep, she took a rifle and its ammunition, with a knife and a deer-skin bag of provisions that she had prepared, quietly left the lodge, and walked down to the shore of the lake.

There she drew a small, white canoe from a clump of bushes, got into it with her plunder, and paddled toward the northern end of the lake.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SPIRIT OF THE LAKE.

A PARTY was slowly ascending the sierra from the western side. It consisted of four white men, a dozen Indians, and two negroes. The leader was Fred Marne, and he had organized the party for the purpose of searching for Emilie Latourette, whom he believed to be in those hills, or in the power of the Apaches at some other place.

With him was Dr. Ray, a physician and a particular friend of Fred's, who had joined the expedition for the sake of ad

venture and for the purpose of recruiting his health and strength. The other white men had been employed by Fred, and one of them was Bob Riley, who has been introduced to the reader. The other was Gus Spann, a grizzly old hunter and Indian-fighter, whose courage and prudence could always be relied on.

The sierra was so rugged where they climbed it, and water was so scarce and hard to find, that they had been obliged to leave their horses at the foot of the hills, where they had discovered a small spring, and were making the ascent on foot.

As scarcity of water and hostility of Indians were the great obstacles to the exploration of those sierras, Fred Marne had been careful to procure a guide who was acquainted with their intricacies, and he had considered himself lucky in engaging Gus Spann, who had made three expeditions into the Organos.

The Indians whom he had employed were Delawares and Shawnees, brave, skillful and reliable men, in whose veins ran the blood of the forest Indians. Most of them had formed part of a band that had waged a long and bitter war with the Apaches, finally compelling that haughty and warlike tribe to sue for peace at the hands of less than fifty resolute men.

They had nearly reached the summit of the sierra, and were on a broad shelf of rock, with a precipitous descent on the western side, and a rugged, rocky ridge at the east. At this spot Spann proposed that they should camp, considerably to the surprise of his companions.

"There is no water here," suggested Fred Marne. "Would it not be better to go on until we reach the wonderful lake that you have told us about?"

"If we don't want the Apaches to find us, we had better stay away from that lake," replied Spann. "If there are any Indians in the hills, and there generally are more or less of them here, they will be sure to keep themselves near the lake."

"But we must have water, and I was relying on getting a supply from the lake."

"Very well. We are not far from it. We have water

enough for supper, and one or two of us can go up to the lake after dark and get some more."

Following the advice of Spann, the party encamped on the shelf, and contented themselves with a cold supper, as it was not considered safe to build a fire. When they had satisfied their hunger, Spann volunteered some information in regard to the locality of their camp.

"I have good reason to remember this place," he said. "I was here that Felix Latourette was killed."

"What's that you say?" asked Fred Marne, suddenly becoming interested in the conversation. "What was the name of the man who was killed here?"

"Felix Latourette. He was a rich trader of those times; but I always thought him too risky of his life and his goods. He found out, at last, that the old saying is true about the pitcher that goes often to the well."

"How was it that he was killed? I wish that you would tell me all about it."

"He had been down the river to collect some money, and was returning to Santa Fe. He only had me and three other men as a guard, and it was awful risky to travel so, as he had a big pile of gold and silver, and a lot of horses that he had taken for debt. I told him so; but the old man was as obstinate as a mule, and would never let any one advise him. He said that he had traveled that route with one man, and that he would never be afraid to do it again.

"We went through the jornada safely, and camped at the first watering place on the river, and that night the red-skins stampeded our horses, and ran off nearly the whole drove. It was strange to me that they didn't rub out us humans; but I reckon they warn't as hungry for scalps, just then, as they were for horses.

"The old man was ripping mad. I had been with him consid'able, but never saw him so rantankerous before. He swore like a trooper, and said that the Injuns had treated us with contempt, because they had taken so many horses and nary a scalp. If they had killed a few of us, I believe he would have been a heap better satisfied.

"He declared that he didn't mean to be treated in that way, without trying to get even, and that he intended to follow

those horses and bring them back, in spite of all the Apaches that ever were pupped. We tried to persuade him out of that notion, as we knew that he didn't care for the horses, and only wanted to have revenge on those red skins; but he was bound to have his way, and we could do nothing but follow his lead. So we set out across the plain, and kept the trail until we came to these hills.

"The old man had his gold and silver on two mules, and he made us go on ahead while he cached the stuff somewhere. When he overtook us, we had lost the trail. You can see that it was easy enough to lose it among these rocks. We got up on this flat reach of rock, and didn't know which way to head, and the old man was raging and roaring like a mad bull, when there was a yell above us, and arrows came down in a cloud, and the Apaches came tumbling down after them.

"The scrimmage was soon ended. I saw the old man go over the bluff with a big Injun who had clinched him, and then I rolled and tumbled and slid and flew down this mountain, as if the devil himself was kicking me. There were only two of us who got away alive—Sam Skeggs and me—and I never want to see a closer shave than we had of it. I thought it would be a good thing to find the cache where the old man had buried his money, and Sam and I came back to hunt it; but we never came across any money, and Sam allowed that the witches of the hills had carried it away."

"Are you sure that Mr. Latourette was killed?" asked Marne.

"Of course he was killed. I don't suppose there was a bit of breath in either him or the Injun when they reached the rocks at the foot of that bluff. If there was any it was smashed out of them mighty sudden. But we must be 'tending to business, as it is getting quite dark. I think that two of us should go to the lake after water, and two more should scout along the crest of the hill to look for Injuns, while the rest stay here in camp."

This proposition was agreed to, and Fred Marne and Dr Ray, with buckets and canteens, started toward the lake, the direction of which had been pointed out to them.

When they had crossed the rocky ridge that lay above the camp, they soon came in sight of the lake, a lovely sheet of

water, situated at the very summit of the mountain. Although it had been described to them, they could not restrain their astonishment at finding such a body of water in such a situation, and they were prepared to believe the statement they had heard that it exhibited the phenomenon of a daily rise and fall, similar to the tides of the ocean.

After looking carefully along the edge of the lake, for Indian signs, and failing to discover any thing of the kind, they seated themselves on the ground, admiring and wondering at the prospect before them. Then they filled their buckets and canteens, and were about to return to the camp, when Fred Marne was startled by an exclamation from Dr. Ray, who pointed at an object that had just come into view on the lake.

The night was clear and starlit, and the moon, about a week old, was hanging on the edge of the horizon, ready to sink out of sight.

Out of the shadow of the opposite shore there shot into the lake a tiny white canoe, so low in the water that it was hardly visible after it left the shadow.

In the canoe was seated a female figure, clothed entirely in white, who propelled the light vessel with a white paddle. She looked neither to the right nor to the left, as she sent her frail craft swiftly through the water, toward the northern end of the lake.

The two men instantly dropped upon the ground, concealed themselves behind some low bushes, and watched the movements of the canoe and its occupant. She was at such a distance from them that her features could not be discerned, and they could only judge by her dress and general appearance that she was a woman.

Was she a living woman?

Intelligent and educated as they were, and entirely devoid of superstition, this question came to the minds of both the men, and they were in no hurry to answer it in the negative. The apparition was so strange and unexpected, so entirely unearthly in its aspect and its actions, that they might well be excused for deeming it of a supernatural character.

The canoe passed rapidly over the water, near the western shore, until it had nearly reached the upper end of the lake,

when it disappeared as suddenly as if it had been swallowed up by the limpid element on which it rode. Then the two men ventured to emerge from their concealment, and to speak to each other.

"What was that, Ray?" asked Fred Marne.

"Why should you ask me?" replied the doctor, with a forced laugh. "You were as near to it as I was, and you saw as much of it as I saw."

"But you saw it first, and you wear glasses, and you are a physician."

"It is all very well, Fred, for you to make fun of it now; but I think you must confess that you were a little scared."

"No more than you were. What do you say it was?"

"A woman in a canoe."

"Of course it was a woman in a canoe; but it is wonderful that she should be in such a place at such a time, robed in white and navigating a white canoe."

"Nothing ought to seem wonderful to us that is connected with a lake on the top of a mountain, in which the tide rises and falls."

"But it is wonderful, nevertheless. Her appearance and disappearance were alike wonderful. If there is any woman here, she must be an Indian woman, and no Indian woman was ever clothed in that fashion. If it was really a woman—"

"And not a ghost," interrupted Ray.

"If it is really a woman, I say, and not an optical illusion, I believe that we have seen either Emilie Latourette or her ghost."

"Nonsense! Your mind is so entirely occupied by the young lady that you suffer your imagination to run wild. You might as well guess that it was the queen of England whom we saw in that canoe. If you are going to allow such ideas to get possession of you, the expedition will be a dangerous one for all of us. It is by no means probable that Miss Latourette is living, and you ought not to allow yourself to entertain any false hopes. Blessed are they who expect nothing, my dear boy; for they shall not be disappointed."

"I would like to go around to the other side of the lake,

to the place where that canoe disappeared; but I suppose we can do nothing about it to-night."

"As there is nothing else to be done, we had better take this water to the camp. Our friends will be wondering what has become of us. We will tell Spann and Riley what we have seen, and ask them what they think about it."

Gus Spann listened very patiently to the story of the two gentlemen, and nodded his head knowingly when it was finished.

"You have seen it," he said. "I thought you would see it before long."

"What do you mean? We have seen what we have told you."

"You have seen the White Spirit of the lake. I have seen it, and other men have seen it, and it can't be any thing but a spirit. It's a powerful place for spirits hereabout, I judge. Sam Skeggs told me that he had seen the ghost of old man Latourette in these hills."

Fred Marne persuaded Spann to describe the apparition as he had seen it, and reaffirmed his opinion that he had seen Emilie Latourette or her ghost. Dr. Ray was willing to admit that he had seen a woman, and was anxious to investigate the subject further.

Captain Bob Riley, who had been scouting with one of the Delawares, soon came into the camp, and heard a portion of the discussion. He didn't pretend to know any thing about ghosts, he said, but had seen something that was more to the purpose—a camp of Apaches.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SPIRIT OF THE GLEN.

It has been said that Pierre Cartier's wife and only child had died soon after Emilie Latourette was lost in the norther.

He had married, rather late in life, a young Mexican woman, who brought him a daughter. He was attached to his

wife and child with all the strength of his selfish nature, and the young wife ruled the middle-aged husband with an absolute despotism.

At the time of his marriage there was living with him an illegitimate son, Adolphe, who was nearly of age. This young man had sorely tried the patience of his putative father by his dissolute and abandoned courses, from which no advice or entreaty or threats had been sufficient to turn him. Mr. Cartier had frequently declared that he would turn Adolphe out upon the world unless he should reform; but it was not until after his marriage that he carried his threat into execution.

His young wife immediately contracted a strong antipathy to Adolphe, because of the accident of his birth and of his own characteristics. He was personally very repugnant to her, and she feared that he might stand in the way of her own child. Therefore she resolved to get rid of him.

This purpose was easily accomplished. The slight ties that bound Pierre Cartier to his unruly son were soon snapped, and Adolphe was sent away with a small sum of money, and with the notification that the paternal mansion would thenceforward be closed to him. After the death of Mr. Cartier's wife and child, the breach between him and Adolphe had become so broad and deep, that neither of them felt disposed to attempt to bridge it. If they had made the attempt, it is probable that their efforts would have been frustrated by Pepita, the woman by whom Mr. Cartier was then ruled.

Adolphe had fully expected to succeed to his father's property; but his hopes had been badly shaken by the marriage. They were completely overthrown when he was driven from the house that he considered his rightful home, and he then solemnly vowed that he would take vengeance on all concerned in his degradation. The death of the new wife and the child removed them out of the reach of his revenge, but his father was left, and Adolphe's was not a nature to forgive or forget an injury.

The money that was given him when he was driven away was soon squandered in dissipation, and his fortunes were reduced to the lowest ebb, when he fell in with a band of desperadoes who kept their pockets replenished by various means

that were not authorized by law. He was easily persuaded to join them, and soon became one of the most valuable members of the fraternity. In fact, he would have been the leader of the band, had not his excessive dissipation prevented its members from yielding him the confidence and obedience that were due to his skill and courage.

We find Adolphe Cartier—he persisted in calling himself by his father's name—and the rest of the band with which he was connected, encamped in a deep ravine in the Sierra Organos, near the summit of the mountain.

The ravine, which might more properly be called a glen, was a wild and terrible place. The solid rock of the mountain had been rent, probably by some volcanic convulsion, and the ragged, distorted masses had been thrown about in the greatest confusion and into the most grotesque shapes. The glen was deep and dark and dismal, with an overhanging cliff that nearly formed a cavern, and that afforded ample shelter from storms. Under the cliff was an ice-cold spring, a great rarity in those hills, from which ran a small stream, that soon lost itself in the rocks.

The band numbered twenty men, including the leaders, and was a strange mixture of Mexicans, Americans, Indians, negroes and mestizos, of men of various nationalities and colors united by a common desire of plunder and a common bond of outlawry.

With the exception of two sentries, stationed at each end of the glen, all were collected around a fire under the cliff, eating, drinking, smoking and talking. They were safe enough in building a fire, as it could not be observed except by the closest scrutiny, and the glen was so situated that no enemy, however strong, would be likely to attack them.

Adolphe Cartier and several others were grouped around one of their number, a jovial, versatile, unscrupulous scamp, who had been an actor and a gambler and almost every thing but what he ought to have been.

The name of this individual was Dick Starrup, and he was the same who had introduced himself to Pierre Cartier as Colonel Chavala, late of the Mexican army. In fact he wore the same undress uniform in which he had been arrayed when he visited the trader.

Dick Starrup was entertaining his hearers with an account of an adventure in which all, but especially Adolphe Cartier, took a lively interest.

"How did the old man look?" asked Adolphe.

"Healthy and hearty; but I couldn't help thinking that he was a little henpecked by the woman I saw there."

"He was always afraid of women, and they could manage him as they pleased. What sort of an animal did she seem to be?"

"Good-looking, almost handsome, though not so young as she had been, with eyes like a tiger, the sort of a woman that I shouldn't want to turn against me."

"Don't get frightened, Dick. She will not be likely to trouble *us*. Did the old man believe your story without much coaxing?"

"Of course he did. He sucked it down as easily as a cat laps milk, and you may be sure that we will have him in our claws before long. He tried to keep from showing how anxious he was to go into the gold-hunting business, until I handed him the specimens of gold and quartz, and then he surrendered at once. He was keen enough for the gold, and I wish he may find it."

"P'raps it ain't so much of a laughin' matter as you think it is, young man," said Sam Skeggs, a long, lank, red-headed, heavy-bearded mountaineer. "It has allers been said that thar's gold in these hills, and I know thar is. I know a ledge whar you can see the gold shinin' long afore you git to it"

"Whew! That's a whopper!"

"It's a fact, though, and I'm sure that thar's placers to be found, ef folks know how to look for 'em. I can go right near a place, too, whar two mule-loads of gold and silver war cached and never dug up. But it's my opinion that all the val'ables in these hills are guarded by ghosts, that won't let 'em be touched."

"That is the best of all. What do you think of Sam's yarn, Adolphe?"

"I think he ought to pass that jug, and give us a chance to wash it down. Will the old man bring much of a party with him, Dick?"

"Some fifteen or twenty men, I suppose; but I picked

nearly half of them, and they will play into our hands. I am to meet him at the foot of the hills, and I reckon that I will boss the job about right."

"Will we be obliged to wipe out those who are not on our side? I don't want to go into the slaughtering business, if I can help it."

"There will be no difficulty about that. I will persuade the old man to go with me alone, to look at some of the gold I have told him about, and then you can easily pick him up and keep him. If any of his men want to make trouble, there are enough of us to take them without a fight."

"It will surprise him considerably to find himself in my clutches, and I will show him no more mercy than he has shown to me. He won't get away until he gives me a good share of the property that rightfully belongs to me."

"Perhaps the property is not as large as you suppose it to be, Adolphe. He told me that he had had many heavy losses of late, and merchants in El Paso said that he was considerably embarrassed."

"He can't help being rich, losses or no losses. Besides his own property, he has all the fortune of my cousin Emilie, who was lost some two years ago."

"Warn't she the darter of Felix Latour  tte, the trader?" inquired Sam Skeggs.

"She was. He was a very rich man, and she was his heiress."

"The old man was killed in this mounting, and his ghost is hangin' around here yet."

"His ghost! What nonsense has got into your head now?"

"I say that the ghost of Felix Latourette is floatin' about these hills. I have seen it, myself, and it ain't the only ghost that has been seen in these parts."

"Creation! What's that?"

This exclamation came from the lips of Ben Hincks, a stout, dark-featured man, who was the leader of the gang, and who was noted for his cruelty, as well as for his courage and caution.

In this instance he gave no evidence of the courage for which he was renowned. His face turned ashy pale, and he sunk upon the ground, pointing with shaking finger at a

white something that was outlined against the cliff on one side of the glen. His companions were similarly frightened, with the exception of Adolphe Cartier, who seemed to retain his presence of mind.

Adolphe rose to his feet, and gazed steadily at the white figure, that appeared to be floating against the rock and gradually descending into the glen.

"Sam Skeggs has been talking about ghosts," he said, "until he has brought one among us. As this is the first specimen I have seen, I must get a nearer view of it, and must endeavor to make its acquaintance."

The others tried to persuade him to abandon the rash attempt, assuring him that no mortal could descend that cliff, and that he would come to grief if he should encounter a spirit; but Adolphe insisted that if the figure was not mortal it could do him no harm, and that he was not afraid of air.

He fortified his courage by taking a stout pull at the jug, and walked boldly in the direction of the white figure.

He had proceeded but a few rods, when he was able to perceive that the supposed spirit was a woman, who had climbed down the cliff by means of a narrow and slanting ledge, which he had never before noticed. She had come to the end of the ledge, and below her was about a dozen yards of nearly smooth and precipitous rock.

When she discovered that she could descend no further, and caught sight of Adolphe advancing toward her, she reached out one hand with a gesture of entreaty, and uttered a faint cry for help.

Adolphe ran back to the camp, snatched up a lariat, and returned to the cliff, which he at once began to climb. By dint of great exertion, and with the aid of slight crevices and irregularities in the stone, he succeeded in reaching the ledge on which the woman was standing.

He spoke to her; but she was too exhausted to answer, and he found it necessary to sustain her fainting form, while he made an end of the lariat fast around a projecting point of rock. With the other end he lowered her to the ground, and then slid down the lariat to her side.

His comrades, who had recovered from their fright when

they saw that Adolphe was not harmed by the spirit, came to his assistance, and the insensible woman was carried to the spring, where her face and head were bathed with the cold water, and she soon opened her eyes.

The firelight showed that she was a white woman, young and beautiful, clothed in a long robe of pure white, slightly discolored where it had come in contact with the damp spots of the cliff.

"Who is she, and what is she, Adolphe?" asked Dick Star-rap. "It is strange that we should never have noticed that path down the cliff, and still more strange that she should have found and followed it. Speak to her, man; or I will."

Since she recovered from her faint, Adolphe had been gazing at her with eyes that seemed ready to start out of his head. When he spoke, it was in an agitated and unnatural voice.

"Can it be possible! Is this Emilie Latourette?"

"That is my name. Who are you?"

"I am Adolphe—your cousin, Adolphe Cartier. Have you forgotten me?"

"I recognize you now," replied Emilie; but she shuddered, as if the recognition was not particularly pleasing to her.

CHAPTER VIII.

CORONO AND THE COYOTES.

WHEN the Gray Hunter arose from his couch in the morning, he looked around for Emilie, but did not see her. She was usually near the lodge at that hour, occupied in preparing the morning meal, but was not then visible.

The old man looked in at her apartment, which was separated from the rest of the lodge by a curtain of skins; but she was not there. He felt of his head, and shook it sadly, as if he feared that something was the matter with his brain, and then walked down to the lake. Emilie was not there, and he wandered about until he noticed the mark of a canoe on the shore, and then it dawned upon him that she had gone

on the lake. He sat down near the shore, and looked out over the water with a dazed expression.

He was in this position when Corono came to him, attended by a number of warriors. The young chief spoke to him reverently ; but he made no reply, and continued to gaze steadily at the lake.

"I have come for White Spirit," said Corono. "I have come to take her to my lodge. Is she ready?"

The old man made no reply, but pointed out across the lake.

"What is the matter with my father? Can he not tell me where to find White Spirit?"

The old man arose, took Corono by the hand, led him to the lodge, and showed him Emilie's empty couch. Then he returned to the lake, and pointed out the mark of the canoe on the shore.

"Do you mean to say that she has gone away?" asked the chief.

Gray Hunter nodded his head sadly.

"Have you sent her away? Where has she gone? When will she return? My father has a tongue; why does he not speak?"

The old man rubbed his eyes, felt of his head, and opened his mouth for the first time since he had missed Emilie. He stated that she had acted very strangely the previous evening, after Corono had left the lake. She had been silent and abstracted, entirely absorbed in her own thoughts, and refusing to answer his questions. He was sure that her mind was occupied with some deep trouble, or that she was meditating some desperate resolve; but he could not induce her to confide in him. He laid down to sleep, and knew nothing more about her, except that she was missing in the morning.

"Do you suppose that she has gone away to avoid me?" asked the chief—"because I said that I meant to make her my wife to-day?"

The Gray Hunter was obliged to admit that that was what he believed to be the cause of her absence.

"Is the girl a fool?" angrily exclaimed Corono. "Does she know that I am an Apache, the great chief of a great nation? Does she suppose that she can treat me like a dog,

and that I will not resent it? If she will not be the wife of Corono, she shall be worse, and the Apache women shall make a mock of her."

Gray Hunter looked at the chief, and there flashed from his eyes something like the fire that might have burned in them when he was young; but he said nothing.

"She can not have gone far," continued Corono. "If she has gone in the canoe on the lake, she has landed somewhere, and her trail can be found."

He divided his warriors into two parties, one of which was to go on each side of the lake and search for the landing-place of the canoe and its occupant.

It was not until they reached the upper end of the lake, after carefully examining every foot of ground on the way, that they found what they sought, and then they saw the delicate footprints of Emilie in the soft earth, before they discovered the canoe, which was hid in a clump of bushes.

As it was then certain that she had absconded, there was nothing to be done but to follow her, and the most experienced men were at once put on her trail. It was easy enough to follow it where the ground was soft, but quite another matter when it led over stony places or bare rocks, where the keenest sight and the nicest discrimination were required to determine where the delicate feet had trod. The trail-searchers were frequently at fault, and were obliged to halt the party while they scattered in different directions, to look for the tracks on more favorable soil.

Their progress, therefore, was slow and tedious, and it was not until after noon that they found themselves at the edge of a cliff, which formed one side of a deep ravine that cut the mountain transversely. Emilie's tracks could be traced within a few yards of the brink of this cliff, and were not to be found anywhere else in the vicinity. The conclusion was inevitable that she had committed suicide by throwing herself into the ravine, or had found some means of descending the cliff.

A closer examination revealed some slight abrasions at the edge of the rock, showing where she had commenced the descent, and this led to the discovery of a break in the cliff, forming a rude pathway that seemed to reach to the bottom of the ravine. While this was being examined, and the feasi-

bility of making the descent was being discussed, one of the Indians caught sight of a white man below, and it was soon ascertained that there was a considerable camp down in the ravine. It became necessary to learn who the intruders were, and whether Emilie had taken refuge among them.

Toward the west the ravine narrowed in one place, although it hardly lost any of its depth, until it could be crossed by means of a large tree, that had been felled on one bank so that the top rested on the other. Two warriors were sent across, to reconnoiter the position of the white men, and to learn their character and numbers.

The scouts soon returned, and reported that the whites numbered twenty well-armed men, and that they composed the band that was known among white men and Apaches as the White Coyotes, men who had frequently allied themselves with the Indians for the purpose of committing depredations upon settlements and traveling parties.

White Spirit was there, the scouts said, in a sort of cavern under a jutting cliff. She was alive, appeared to be well and in good spirits, and acted as if she believed herself surrounded by friends.

The position of the Coyotes was so strong as to be almost impregnable. They could not be reached from above by bullets or any other means, and each narrow end of the ravine, where sentries were stationed to give the alarm in case of danger, could be defended by a few men against a large force.

Corono was greatly excited when he learned that White Spirit was in the ravine, and he resolved to recover her at all hazards, as well as to punish the Coyotes for their intrusion upon ground that was sacred to the Apaches. As his numbers were not more than equal to those of the white men, he could not expect to conquer them, if it should come to a fight, without reinforcements, and he at once dispatched one of his best men, with instructions to get a swift horse from the corral at the foot of the hill, and to bring up the remainder of the warriors, who were hunting at no great distance.

Before proceeding to extremities, Corono resolved to try what virtue there was in peaceable measures, hoping that the Coyotes might be induced to give up the girl, on the condition that they should be left unmolested.

Accordingly he descended into the ravine with his party by a circuitous and difficult route, and reached the sentry at the western end, by whom he was promptly challenged. In answer to the challenge, he gave his name and tribe and rank, and said that he wished to have a talk with the leaders of the Coyotes.

The alarm was given at the camp in the ravine, and Hincks came forward, with Cartier and Starrup and Skeggs, while the rest of the band stood to their arms, ready to punish treachery or repel an attack.

Hincks, who was well acquainted with the Apache chief, greeted him in a friendly manner, and asked him what he wanted.

"I want to know," replied Corono, "what it is that the Coyotes are doing here. These mountains belong to the Apaches, and we do not allow white men to enter them."

Desirous of conciliating the chief, Hincks replied that he and his men had been chased by a party of soldiers, whose horses they had endeavored to stampede. They had taken refuge in the hills, and wished to remain there a few days, to rest and to make arrangements for another raid.

"It is well," said Corono, who also had his reasons for showing a conciliatory disposition. "The Coyotes may remain here until five suns have risen, and then they must leave the mountains. There is another matter that has brought me here. We have lost a prisoner—a white woman whom we call White Spirit. She has come to your camp, and we want you to give her up to us."

Hincks looked at Cartier, who, after a glance at the chief, knew that it would be useless to argue the matter; but he was tempted to ask a question or two.

"Why do you believe that she is here?"

"We traced her to the bluff," replied Corono, "at the point where she went down, and my warriors have seen her in your camp."

"What right have you to claim her?"

"She belongs to us. She has been a prisoner among the Apaches for a long time. She was to be the wife of a great chief. To-day she was to enter the lodge of Corono; but strange fancies came into her head, and she arose in the night

and left us. I have come to take her back, and I must have her. If the Coyotes wish the Apaches to be their friends, they will give her up without any more words."

Hincks drew Cartier aside, and whispered to him :

"We had better give up the gal. That chief is in earnest, and he will fight for her if he can't get her peaceably."

There was a flash of manliness in Adolphe's answer :

"I would die, rather than give her up to that red-skin!"

Then selfishness came uppermost, as he added an argument that was calculated to convince Hincks.

"I mean to marry her myself, don't you see? She has a splendid fortune of her own, which I will make mine, and you know that I always divide fairly. These Apaches need not trouble us. It is as easy to get rid of them as to brush away a lot of flies."

Hincks, although not entirely convinced of the propriety of the course, permitted his subordinate to go forward and finish the negotiation with the chief.

"We can not give up the white girl," said Adolphe. "She is my cousin. She was lost a long time ago, and the Apaches have kept her against her will. She is not willing to remain with them; but wishes to return to her own people. Let the chief sell her to us, and we will pay him a good price."

An angry frown gathered on the brow of Corono, and he replied passionately, declaring that he wanted his captive and nothing else, and demanding that she should instantly be given up to him.

Adolphe was cool and firm in his refusal to comply with this demand, and the anger of the Apache increased. He threatened the white men with the vengeance of his tribe, and assured them that they should not leave the mountains alive, if they attempted to thwart his purpose.

"We would be sorry to make enemies of the Apaches," replied Adolphe; "but we can not do wrong to please them. My cousin shall return to her own people. We are not to be frightened by the big words of Corono."

The chief raised his rifle, and his followers imitated his example; but a glance at the steady front and the leveled tubes of the white men told him that he had better not provoke a collision until he should be better prepared, and he

withdrew from the pass, muttering as he went, to await the arrival of his reënforcements.

It had already occurred to Corono that one side of the pass could be guarded as well as the other. If the Coyotes persisted in keeping him out, he could keep them in until his warriors should come up, when he hoped to make short work of them.

He directed his men to make a breastwork in front of the pass, of the scattered rock that was plentiful there, and the Apaches encamped near it, their sentry being in sight of the white sentry within the pass.

CHAPTER IX

IN THE TOILS.

DICK STARRUP was not in the least troubled by the fact that the Apaches had beleaguered the camp of the Coyotes. On the contrary, he saw in that circumstance only a fund for merriment and self-gratulation. He had long owed the Apaches a grudge, he said, and at last he saw a good chance to punish them. Besides, as he told his friend, Adolphe Cartier, their plans had worked to a charm, and the probability was that they would soon become rich men, beyond any temptation to dishonesty, and consequently respectable and happy.

"How fortunate it is, Adolphe," he said, "that that heiress cousin of yours happened to drop in upon us so unexpectedly! Of course I know that she is only a cousin over the left; but that is all for the best, as she is sure not to be within the prohibited degrees of relationship, and we can marry her with impunity."

"What do you mean by *we*?" grumbled Adolphe. "Do you suppose that the whole party can marry her?"

"By no means, my dear boy. When I use that expression, I refer only to your noble self; but, as I am to be interested in the profits, I naturally connect myself with the whole business. It was extremely opportune that she should drop

down in our midst, like an angel from heaven, and nothing can be more natural than that you should marry her out of hand, although she does not appear, so far, to be over head and ears in love with you."

"What are you hinting at now?"

"I retract. She evidently feels for you such an affection as the lamb feels for the wolf, and you love her as a hungry wolf naturally loves a young and tender lamb."

"I tell you, Dick, that I love that girl truly and deeply. I have loved her for years, and now I love her more than ever."

"I am glad to hear it. It would relieve my conscience, if I had one that needed relieving. It is to be hoped that she may be induced to return your ardent affection. All the chances are in your favor here. You can make her believe that you are a first-class hero, in saving her from Corona and his Apaches, and it is to be expected that her gratitude will soon ripen into love."

"You are right, Dick. The chances are in my favor; but I shall rely upon you to give me some hints."

"Trust me for that. Whether you succeed in gaining her love or not, you will marry her all the same, and when you are a rich man you will not forget those who were your friends in adversity. I am particularly pleased, just now, with thinking of the surprise of that precious old father of yours, when he comes here and discovers his long-lost relative. He believes her to be dead, and rejoices in the fact that he has full possession of her fortune, with no one to take it from him or to call him to account for its management. It will be really beautiful, an interesting study of human nature, to observe him when he sees her alive, and learns that his discarded son is about to marry her, and when you tell him that you will trouble him to hand over that little property in his possession belonging to your bride. It will be as good as a play, and will be sweeter to you than any other style of revenge."

"That's a fact. He will crawl and squirm then, and will be glad enough to make terms with me. How do you expect to get him up here, Dick?"

"It is possible that he is at the foot of the mountain now, with his party, waiting for me, and I must go down and see

down in our midst, like an angel from heaven, and nothing can be more natural than that you should marry her out of hand, although she does not appear, so far, to be over head and ears in love with you."

"What are you hinting at now?"

"I retract. She evidently feels for you such an affection as the lamb feels for the wolf, and you love her as a hungry wolf naturally loves a young and tender lamb."

"I tell you, Dick, that I love that girl truly and deeply. I have loved her for years, and now I love her more than ever."

"I am glad to hear it. It would relieve my conscience, if I had one that needed relieving. It is to be hoped that she may be induced to return your ardent affection. All the chances are in your favor here. You can make her believe that you are a first-class hero, in saving her from Corona and his Apaches, and it is to be expected that her gratitude will soon ripen into love."

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"That's a fact. He will crawl and squirm then, and will be glad enough to make terms with me. How do you expect to get him up here, Dick?"

"It is possible that he is at the foot of the mountain now, with his party, waiting for me, and I must go down and see

him. I think I can persuade him, as I said I hoped to do, to go with me alone to look for gold. If he consents, I will bring him right here to the camp, and it will be your own fault if you don't keep him."

"But the Apaches have surrounded us now. How will you get out and in?"

"They are only on one side. The other end of the glen is open. In fact, it is better for me that the red-skins are concentrated here, as they won't be roaming about and getting in my way. I will go now to look up the old man, and you must lose no chance to get into the good graces of the girl."

Starrup was successful in performing his errand. He reached the foot of the mountain without difficulty, and soon found Pierre Cartier and his party, who had encamped according to his directions, and were waiting for him. There were fifteen men in the party, more than half of whom Dick had selected with the intention of adding them to the Coyote band.

It was not a very easy thing to induce Cartier to go into the mountains alone to search for gold. Some strange conduct and expressions on the part of the men employed by Starrup had rendered him uneasy and distrustful. He finally consented to go with his friend, Colonel Chavala, on condition that he should be accompanied by two of his own men, and with this condition Dick was obliged to comply.

When these four men reached the summit of the sierra, the day was far advanced, and Cartier, as well as his companions, felt the need of refreshment. Starrup proposed to take them to a gulch in which there was plenty of gold, where they could dine by the side of a spring of water, and prospect for the precious metal at their leisure.

Glad enough to be able to accomplish two objects at once, Cartier directed him to go on, and Dick led the way into the ravine that was occupied by the band of Coyotes.

Adolphe, as directed by the decoy, had concealed a number of men at the entrance of the pass, who remained hidden until Starrup and his companions had nearly got through. Then four men rose up in front, four in the rear, and two at each side; who, with leveled guns, demanded the surrender of the party.

Cartier, after looking about and seeing himself surrounded

by armed white men, turned angrily upon Starrup, and demanded the meaning of this outrage.

"Don't excite yourself, my dear sir," replied Dick. "You will know all about it after a while. The best thing you can do is to surrender peaceably, as you must see that it would be useless to attempt to resist."

"Is this the honor of which Mexican officers boast? It is base treachery, Colonel Chavala, and you will surely be made to repent it."

"I beg that you will not excite yourself. It is my duty to inform you that the Chavala dodge is played out. I have made my last appearance on these boards in that role, and must now introduce myself in my true character, as Dick Starrup, high private in the honorable and independent Coyote Rangers, of whom Ben Hincks is captain and Adolphe Cartier is lieutenant."

"Adolphe Cartier! Is that fellow here?"

"That gentleman is here, and I will thank you to speak of him more respectfully. I will take you to him directly. You have nothing to do now but lay down your arms and submit."

As there was no help for it, Mr. Cartier and his companions yielded their weapons to their captors, and followed Starrup into the ravine, where Adolphe was seated on a flat stone, waiting to receive them.

Mr. Cartier's indignation rose higher at the sight of his discarded son, and he demanded to be told for what purpose he had been betrayed and brought there.

"Do you suppose that I have no filial feeling?" replied Adolphe. "Do you suppose that I have no desire to see the father who has been so kind to me, and to whom I owe so much? You are mistaken if you believe me as hard-hearted as you are. You forbid me to visit you, and I was so anxious to see you that I was obliged to send for you."

"You may visit me whenever you choose to do so, Adolphe. Allow me to return, and I will never forbid you my house."

"Thank you. The permission has come rather late in the day; but I am none the less obliged to you for it. I suppose you are aware that I might call on you at any time, with these friends of mine, and that we might make ourselves at home in your house without your permission. But I am not

rich enough to show myself in such fine company as my honored father frequents, and I will be obliged to ask you to allow me a little pocket money, in order that I may present a becoming appearance."

"Certainly, Adolphe. Any thing within the limits of reason you shall have and be welcome to it."

"For fear that your ideas and mine should differ on that point, or that you might forget your promise, I must trouble you to give me a deed of gift of certain property which I shall name, and of which I shall be able to take possession before you can retract the gift."

"I can't do that, Adolphe. Ask me any thing reasonable, and you shall have it. You will be remembered in my will, and all I have will descend to you."

"It is an old saying that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. I have caught my bird, and I mean to pluck him before I let him go."

"I have nothing to give you, Adolphe. I have had heavy losses, and have little left besides Emilie Latourette's property, and who knows but some one may come to claim that?"

"Who knows, indeed! Not you, of course! You don't know whether she is alive or dead? You have no suspicion on the subject?"

"Of course she is dead. I know nothing about her. I have no reason to believe that she is alive. Why do you address such language to me?"

"Because I happen to know that the Apaches have got white robes from you, every six moons, for a white woman whom they call the White Spirit, and I know as well as you know—or can guess as well as you can—for whom these robes were intended."

"Do you mean to say that they were intended for Emilie? Do you believe that she is living? Tell me more, Adolphe, if you know any thing with certainty."

"Bah! It is useless to try to deceive me. Your hypocrisy will avail you nothing here. Come with me and you shall see what you shall see."

Adolphe led his father to the overhanging ledge that made a wide shelter at the foot of the cliff, to a place where it was nearly shut in by two large masses of rock that had fallen

from above. Here he stopped, and pointed between the rocks to where Emilie sat, by the light of a small fire, combing her long, bright locks.

Mr. Cartier started back in genuine consternation, if not in genuine amazement.

"Is it Emilie?" he exclaimed, "or is it her ghost?"

"You know well enough that it is Emilie, though you would be glad to believe it to be her ghost," sneeringly replied Adolphe. "I don't wonder that you are surprised at seeing her here."

"The dear child! Let me go to her! Let me speak to her and hear her voice! Let me embrace her once again!"

"Not if I know it. She is better off without your embraces. You would like very well to strangle her, no doubt; but that would not suit my plans."

"What are your plans? It would be best for both of us, Adolphe, if she should be got out of the way."

"It would not be best for *me*. She is not at all in my way. In fact, she is my stepping-stone to fortune. I mean to marry her."

"You! The idea is absurd. She will never marry you."

"Why not? She might easily find a worse-looking or a worse-natured man. Besides, I don't know how she is going to help herself. I am in the habit of doing as I please."

"There is something in that, to be sure. How long do you mean to keep me here, my son?"

"My father, I have such a strong affection for your person, such an absorbing desire for your presence, that I will not be able to allow you to leave me until we shall have effected that little arrangement about which I was speaking awhile ago. In the meantime it will be better for you to sleep upon the subject. You will be well guarded, and I hope that your slumbers may be sweet, and that you will be ready in the morning to grant my filial request."

As Adolphe finished speaking, there was a shot at the eastern end of the glen, and in a few moments a man came running to him, to say that his presence was required at that point.

Leaving Mr. Cartier in the care of two of the Coyotes, he hastened away with the man who had brought the message.

CHAPTER X.

THE DEAD ALIVE.

FRED MARNE was so excited by what he had seen at the lake, that he was anxious to form a party, the first thing in the morning, to go and make explorations in that locality, and to search for the woman or spirit that had glided away in the canoe.

Several circumstances conspired to prevent him from carrying this project into execution as soon as he wished to. There were various duties to be attended to at the camp, in order to make ready for the campaign that was supposed to be necessary, after the discovery of the presence of Indians in the sierra.

He was unable to start until after dinner, when he set out to begin the exploration, accompanied by Dr. Ray and Bob Riley, leaving the others to follow at their convenience.

When they came in sight of the lake, they also came in sight of an Indian lodge, which they had not perceived when they made their visit at night. It was formed of skins stretched upon poles, and Bob Riley at once pronounced it the lodge of a medicine-man. It was located at a little distance from the lake, and was surrounded by dwarf trees, that partly concealed and sheltered it.

Between the lodge and the lake an Indian was seated on a stone—an old Indian, with long white hair and a heavy gray beard. He sat in a crouching posture, with his hands clasped over his knees, and his head slightly raised, gazing wistfully out upon the lake.

To the surprise of the white men, he did not run away as they approached, nor did he even rise to his feet. There could be no doubt that he saw them; but he continued to gaze steadily at the water, without moving.

It was not until Fred Marne went to him and touched him on the shoulder that he lifted up his head, and then his va-

cant, lack-luster eyes told the young gentleman that his reason was impaired.

Fred spoke to him, and asked him what he was doing there.

"She is gone," replied the old man, speaking in good English, and stretching out his long arm toward the lake.

"Who is gone?"

"The White Spirit is gone. She went out on the lake into the darkness, and it swallowed her up. But Corono is on the trail with his braves, and he will bring her back, and she shall be his wife."

"Whose wife shall she be?"

"The Apaches are a great nation, and Corono is a great chief; but she shall not go into his lodge if she fears him and hates him. She does fear him, or she would not have gone away."

"We will save her, old man. Corono shall not make her his wife. Which way did he go with his braves?"

The old man pointed toward the head of the lake.

"Let us follow them! They will be slow on the trail, if they find it, and we can overtake them."

"Don't be too fast, my boy," said Dr. Ray. "Let us know what we are going to do, before we start. We must wait for our friends to come up, and I want to ask some questions here. What is your name, old man?"

"I am the Gray Hunter of the Apaches."

"Who is the White Spirit? Is not her name Emilie Latourette?"

"That was her name when I found her; but she is now called the White Spirit."

"I told you so!" exclaimed Marne. "I told you, Ray, that it was Emilie we saw, or her ghost."

"And I told you that it was not her ghost."

"Let us find the trail and follow it. There are enough of us to take her out of the power of the Apaches."

"Our friends are coming. We must all go together."

As the others came up, Gus Spann, who was in the advance, started back in astonishment as he caught sight of the old Indian, and his face was absolutely livid with affright. Dr. Ray, fearing that he had hurt himself in some way, stepped to him and asked him what was the matter.

"Sam Skeggs was right," gasped the hunter. "He told me that he had seen the ghost of old man Latourette in these hills, and there it is now."

He pointed at the old Indian, who had resumed his former position, and was again gazing wistfully out upon the lake.

"That is no ghost, you great booby!" said Ray. "That is a living man—an Indian—who can walk and talk."

"If it is not his ghost, it is his living self. His hair and beard are whiter than they once were, and his face is browner; but he always looked like an Indian."

"This is nothing but imagination, Gus. You have said that it is impossible that Mr. Latourette should be alive."

"I believed it, too; but that is the old man, if it is not a ghost. I know him well, and I can't be mistaken. I will speak to him, and he may remember me."

Spann spoke to the old Indian, calling him by the name of Latourette; but no recognition followed his efforts.

"That was *her* name; but we call her White Spirit now," said Gray Hunter. "It is a strange name, and I must have heard it long ago; but I don't know what it means."

In response to the question of Marne and others of the party, he told when and where and how he had found Emilie on the plain, and gave a sketch of her life from that time up to the hour of her flight from Corono. He appeared to grieve for the Apache because of her loss, and to sympathize with Emilie in her repugnance to a union with the red chief, and his mind wandered more than ever when he dwelt upon this subject.

On all these points his memory was clear and exact, and he perfectly remembered many matters that had impressed themselves upon his mind during the long series of years that he had passed among the Indians; but he knew nothing of his life prior to his Apache experience, and all the efforts of his questioners were unable to bring any thing before his understanding that could connect his present with his past.

"He is Felix Latourette," said Spann; "but he might as well be an Injun, for all the use he is in this world now. His senses are all adrift, and a man might as well say that Felix Latourette had been killed by lightning, and an Apache had sprung up in his place."

Dr. Ray, as a medical man, was looked to to express his opinion upon this state of affairs, and he shook his head profoundly, according to the custom of his profession, before he ventured to speak.

"Are you sure, Spann, that the old man fell over that cliff?"

"I saw him go over, clinched with a big red-skin. He must have gone to the bottom, and I don't know how he could have lived after such a fall; but here he is, and that's all I can say about it."

"If this is Felix Latourette," said the doctor, "we are bound to admit that the fall did not kill him; but his brain must have sustained a severe injury, which has nearly destroyed his recollection, and has badly disordered his reasoning faculties. He does not know his own name or that of his child, and he was willing, if not anxious, that she should become the wife of a wild Apache. I believe that Spann's theory of the lightning-stroke is the correct one."

"Will he ever recover?" asked Marne.

"It is possible that he may, but not at all probable. A cure might be effected by trepanning the skull, or some counter-shock might remove the pressure that I suppose to be on the brain."

"He is harmless and docile—that is one comfort. We must take him with us when we go to search for his daughter, and we ought to be on the trail now."

Gray Hunter was willing enough to go with the white men, and attached himself particularly to Fred Marne, by whose side he walked. But he was sad and silent, hardly answering when he was spoken to.

They easily found the trail at the upper end of the lake, and followed it until, at a late hour in the afternoon, they came to the chasm at which the Apache had stopped.

As the trail led toward the west along the edge of the ravine, they would have continued to follow it had not one of their number, as had been the case with the Apaches, perceived signs of human occupation far down in the chasm.

This led to an examination, and the trunk bridge at the narrowest part of the ravine was soon discovered, and Gus Spann and one of the Delawares were sent across to recon-

noiter. They were gone a long time—so long that their friends naturally became impatient; but they brought strange and unexpected news when they at last returned.

They had seen Emilie Latourette, or a woman whom they supposed to be Emilie, nearly hidden under an overhanging ledge at the foot of the cliff. They had also seen twenty or more white men, whom they had no hesitation in pronouncing to be a well-known band of Coyotes, as they had recognized Ben Hincks and Adolphe Cartier as leaders of such a band. Among these desperadoes was an elderly white man, bound and guarded, whom Spann believed to be Pierre Cartier; but of this he could not be sure, and it was a long time since he had seen Cartier.

Convinced that there must be Apaches somewhere in the vicinity, the scouts searched for them carefully, and finally saw one in the pass at the western end of the glen. Further investigation revealed the fact that the Apaches were encamped there, that they had thrown up a sort of fortification, and that the white men were besieged at that end of their stronghold.

The report of the scouts gave Fred Marne and his friends considerable uneasiness, and they were at a loss to understand the situation of affairs.

Had Emilie gone to the Coyotes of her own free will, or had she been captured by them? As Adolphe Cartier was her left-handed cousin, it was to be supposed that she was among them of her own accord. This supposition was by no means pleasing to Marne, though it was better for her to be there than to be the wife of the Apache. But how did Pierre Cartier happen to be in the hills, and why was he a prisoner to his own son? This was a question to which no one could furnish an answer, although there were plenty of guesses.

A consultation was held, at which it was settled that the Apaches were determined to get possession of Emilie, and that they intended to hold the Coyotes where they were, until they could receive sufficient reinforcements to justify them in making an attack. As she must be preserved from them, at all hazards, it was judged best to open communications with the Coyotes, and to form an alliance with them against the Apaches.

The western end of the ravine being occupied by the Indians, the party descended to the eastern end, which they reached by a circuitous route, and with great difficulty. It was dark when they came to the narrow pass, where they found themselves confronted and halted by a sentry of the Coyotes.

In reply to the hail, Bob Riley said that they wished to see Adolphe Cartier, or some other leader of the Coyotes, concerning a matter to which it would be to his interest to attend.

Adolphe came to the pass, after a while, accompanied by several men, and asked who they were and what they wanted.

"I reckon you know me," said Riley, "and Gus Spann, here, is a man you have seen before, too. This young gentleman is Mr. Fred Marne, who has come into the hills to look up a young lady named Emilie Latourette. She was lost in a norther, some two years ago, and it was supposed that the Apaches had her. We traced her to a lodge near the lake, and from there we followed her to this place, and we know that she is here. We want to get her away from the Apaches and to take her to her friends."

"You needn't trouble yourselves," replied Adolphe. "She is already with her friends, and has no need of any assistance from you. Her only relatives are here, and if Mr. Marne, or any other young gentleman, has a better claim to her than they have, I would like to know what it is."

"Her claim to herself is more valid than any other claim," interposed Fred Marne. "If you will bring her here, and if she says that she wishes to remain, her wishes shall be respected."

"You have probably come from the States, young gentleman, where people learn the meaning of impudence. As you have no shadow of right to interfere in this matter, I shall not trouble myself to agree to your proposition. I have no objection to informing you that she is not only willing but anxious to remain with me. It is only natural that she should be, as she will soon become my wife."

Fred Marne was so staggered by this statement, that it was some moments before he could speak. He did not believe that

Adolphe had spoken the truth, but was unwilling that his disbelief should be apparent.

"As you are her relative," he said, "it is probable that she has told you of the danger that threatens her, and that she has fled from the Apaches for the purpose of escaping from a chief who wished to make her his wife. That chief, with a number of his warriors, is encamped near this place, determined to get possession of her. It is probable that he is only waiting for reinforcements to wipe you out."

Adolphe laughed, and to Fred Marne his mirth seemed strangely out of place and insulting.

"I know all about that," said he. "My cousin feels safe while she is under my protection, and we need no help from any quarter. It would not be an easy matter to wipe out the Coyotes. As you are so deeply interested in Miss Latourette, I suppose you must have ascertained the value of her property before you started on this errand."

This taunt stung Fred Marne so sharply that he would have made a hasty and caustic reply, if he had not been drawn back by Dr. Ray, who then assumed charge of the negotiation, and mildly requested permission for his party to encamp in the ravine until the Apaches should retire, or until the danger of a collision should be over.

This request was peremptorily refused by Adolphe, who ordered them to keep outside the pass, and declared that he would order his men to fire on them if they should attempt to enter the ravine.

As Fred Marne and his party were unwilling to provoke a collision, they withdrew beyond the pass, and encamped for the night.

CHAPTER XI.

FIRST BLOOD FOR THE APACHES.

It was Dick Starrup's intention that the men who had been employed by him as a portion of the gold-hunting party should join Ben Hincks' band of Coyotes after the primary purpose of the expedition had been accomplished. He had picked them out for this purpose, and they had all signified their desire to try the free, roving life which he had described to them in its brightest colors.

When he went up into the mountain with Mr. Cartier, he left a Mexican, named Nunez, in charge of the party, with instructions to carry his design into effect.

This was quite a delicate business, and Nunez was hardly a proper man to manage it successfully. His adherents were eight in number, while there were only five of the others, since Mr. Cartier had taken two of them into the mountains; but those five were Americans, and their leader was a lank, hatchet-faced, shrewd Yankee, named Jedediah Barnes, who was devoted to the interests of Mr. Cartier. Nunez believed that his party would have the advantage in a tussle; but he knew that it was not the wish of Starrup to bring on a collision.

After a consultation with his men, he concluded that it would be best to state his purpose to the others, and invite them to join him. If they should be unwilling to do so, the two parties might quietly separate, and each would go its own way. He also decided to say nothing about the matter just then, but to let his course be determined by circumstances.

The morning after Mr. Cartier had gone up into the mountain, Jed Barnes became quite uneasy concerning him, and expressed a fear that some accident had happened to him.

"You needn't give yourself any uneasiness," said Nunez. "He is safe enough; but you will not see him here again."

"How is that? What do you mean?" inquired the Yankee, who had already suspected that something was wrong.

"The fact is, that he was not brought here for the purpose

of hunting gold. If there is any gold in these hills, no white man knows any thing about it. He was brought here because he was sent for by his son, Adolphe Cartier, who is one of the leaders of a body of free and independent rangers, who have their head-quarters in these hills."

"Do you mean to say that he has been entrapped, betrayed, kidnapped?"

"You say that yourself, and you may use those words if you want to. Colonel Chavala is nobody but one of the Coyotes, as the band is called. You have heard of Adolphe, no doubt, and you know something of the manner in which he has been treated by his father. You may judge, then, whether Pierre Cartier will be allowed to leave these hills without making such an arrangement as will be satisfactory to his son. Do you understand me?"

"Your words are plain enough to be understood. I suppose that you, with seven other men in this party, have been in the secret of this kidnapping business, and that you have helped to carry it out. Now that you have succeeded, what do you propose to do?"

"We propose to join the Coyotes, and I have no objection to telling you that we came for that express purpose. I have been authorized to say to you that you may join the band if you wish to, and I strongly advise you to do so, as it is a free and independent life, and offers a splendid chance for getting money. But you have heard of the Coyotes, and I don't think I need to persuade you. I will only say that all the members of the band share equally, except the officers, who receive a larger share than the others."

"I have heard of the Coyotes; but I hardly know what to think of your offer. I will consult with my men, if you have no objection, and will give you an answer soon."

The Yankee went aside with his four men, and soon discovered that their opinions exactly coincided with his own. All had been a long time in the employ of Pierre Cartier, and all expressed their willingness to do any thing in their power for the man who had proved himself their friend. It would be foolish to provoke a difficulty with their treacherous comrades, and they felt that they ought not to leave the hills without making an effort to rescue their employer.

It was decided that they should accept the offer that had been made by Nunez, and should go with him to the rendezvous of the Coyotes, where they hoped to be able to liberate Mr. Cartier by strategy. If they should be unable to do so, it would be easy to escape and cut loose from the band.

Nunez was surprised at the success he had met in his recruiting efforts, and proposed that they should go at once to the rendezvous of the Coyotes. As he was acquainted with the location of the ravine, he acted as guide, and led the way up into the mountain, after corraling the animals in what was deemed to be a safe place at the foot of the hills.

It was not yet noon when they came in sight of the pass that formed the entrance to the Coyote stronghold. The approach to the pass was up a broad but not very deep hollow, which rapidly grew narrower, with high and steep sides, until it terminated in the contracted opening to the deep glen, just outside of which Corono and his warriors had encamped and fortified themselves.

"Here is the place!" exclaimed Nunez, as he caught sight of a column of smoke in the hollow before them.

"*Halt!*" shouted Jed Barnes, whose eyes were keener than those of the Mexican. "Come back, for your lives! We are surrounded by Indians!"

The Yankee was nearly right. There was an overwhelming force of Apaches in front of them, who were gradually spreading out on each flank, and who poured in a volley of bullets and arrows as soon as their presence was discovered. Nunez, who was in the advance, was instantly killed, and those who were nearest to him fled precipitately.

In times of great peril, the lead naturally devolves upon the most capable. It is either thrust upon him, or he takes it as a matter of necessity. Thus it was that Jed Barnes at once became the leader of the party of white men, and took measures to save them from the extermination that threatened them.

As he came up the hollow, he had noticed a cleft in the rock at the right, which had the appearance of a natural fortification, being a sort of gallery, with a rude parapet at the edge, approached by a narrow way that could be easily defended.

Toward this gallery he directed the men to retreat, while he faced about with the four upon whom he could rely, and presented a steady front to the Indians, who came on at a run, shooting and yelling as they came.

The Indians were surprised in their turn by the volley that met them and checked their advance; but the retreat could not have been secured, had not the Apaches been demoralized by a quick and heavy firing in their rear, by which the attention of many of them was drawn in that direction.

Jed Barnes and his party, after two of their number had been wounded by arrows, succeeded in reaching the gallery, where they were safe for the present, as the Apaches found to their cost when they attempted to follow them. They were safe from attack; but their situation was unpleasant and dangerous enough, as it was impossible to procure food and water, and they could not expect to hold the position for any length of time. The wounded men, although not dangerously hurt, needed all the water that was in the canteens, and no one could say what was to be done when that supply should be exhausted. Back of them was a precipitous cliff, in front was the rude parapet that was their only safeguard, and below was a horde of savages lying in wait for chances to pick them off. Beyond the pass at the right, as Jed Barnes believed from what Nunez had told him, were the Coyotes, who were at least better than Apaches; but there was no reaching them except by cutting a way through the Indians, and that appeared to be impossible.

The messenger who had been sent by Corono to bring up the Apache reinforcements had found on the plain near the sierra a large body of warriors, who were on their way to join their chief for the purpose of making a raid into northern Mexico. These had promptly come up into the mountains, and Corono found himself at the head of a force that he believed to be amply sufficient to accomplish his objects. He divided his warriors into two bodies, sending half to the eastern end of the ravine, and keeping the remainder under his own control at the western end.

It thus appears that the opposing forces that were concentrated in and about the ravine were posted in a very peculiar manner, and that the collision between them, if a collision

should occur, would be likely to develop some strange situations. There were nearly two hundred Apaches, united and under one head, against fifty-odd white men with their Indian allies and negroes, who were not only divided among themselves, but were so situated that they would have been unable to assist each other if they had wished to do so.

Within the glen were twenty-three Coyotes and others counting Mr. Cartier and his two men, ready to repel an attack from any quarter. At the eastern end were Fred Marne and his friends, counting the two negro cooks. In their rear were half the force of Apaches, reconnoitering the position, and preparing to attack. At the western end were the rest of the Apaches, and behind them were Jed Barnes and his small party, who were effectually "treed."

CHAPTER XII.

EMILIE'S WORSHIPER.

IF Emilie Latourette was not fortunate in securing three lovers, she was lucky in having one worshiper.

Her worshiper was Chicco, the half-breed boy who had been with the Gray Hunter when she was found on the plain, and who had since continued with the old man, acting as his errand-boy and general assistant.

Unlike the generality of lovers, Chicco did not obtrude his admiration upon its object, but was content to admire her at a distance, and to prove his devotion by every possible service he could render her.

He had grown to be a tall and fine young man, strong and active, lithe and graceful, an excellent shot with rifle and bow, skilled in all the wiles and wisdom of the Indians, and with an added intelligence that he had inherited from his white ancestry. Although he was a half-breed, he was all Indian in his appearance, and it was only in some peculiar actions and modes of thought that his white blood showed itself.

Chicco had long been aware of the feelings with which Corono regarded White Spirit, and had known that the young chief was firm in his intention of making her his wife. His intellect, more subtle than the impaired intelligence of Gray Hunter, had comprehended the fact that Corono was repugnant to the white maiden, and that an attempt by him to force her to become his wife would result in her escape or self-destruction. He had fully settled it in his own mind that he would stand by her in any emergency, but had not thought it necessary to make his determination known to her.

When Corono came to take possession of Emilie, Chicco was absent, having been sent on an errand to the Apache country in the North-west. When he returned, the lodge was deserted, and neither Emilie nor the old man were to be seen. He knew that something unusual had occurred, and set himself at work to find out what it was.

As there was no one to tell him what had happened, he was obliged to rely upon his eyes for his information, and his discoveries were made at the expense of no little pains and patience.

There were many tracks near the lodge and about the lake, and he set himself to studying them. As there had been no rain or other disturbing influence to alter these records, he felt sure of being able to read them, although they were so numerous and intricate.

He recognized the delicate footprint of White Spirit—it was impossible for Chicco to mistake that. He was also sure of the track of Gray Hunter, from a peculiarity in the make of his moccasins. Mingled with these were the marks of a number of Apaches, of whose tracks he could have no doubt. He also noticed the impression of boots in the earth, and knew that white men had been there. Besides these tracks there were marks of other moccasined feet, differing so slightly from those of the Apaches, that a close inspection was required to distinguish them. Chicco was not only able to decide that these tracks had been made by forest Indians, but to make quite an accurate estimate of their numbers.

Having learned who the people were who had been about the lodge and the lake, it was necessary to determine what

they had been doing, and it was in this endeavor that the Indian instinct, which is only another name for careful observation and close reasoning, came into play.

He soon perceived that the only tracks left by White Spirit had been made before much dew had fallen, and that they terminated at a canoe mark on the shore of the lake. From this he concluded that she had gone away upon the lake at an early hour of the night.

The Apache tracks had been made while the dew was on the ground, and those of the white men and the forest Indians after the sun had dried up the moisture. Both parties had gone around the lake on each side, and Chicco followed one of the trails until he came to the place where they converged, where Emilie had landed from her canoe.

He knew that she had left the lodge at an early hour in the night, and conjectured that the presence of Corono had been the cause of her flight. He concluded that the Apaches had come on the ground early in the morning, and had followed her trail. The white men and the forest Indians had not arrived until the sun was several hours high, and had followed the Apaches, and Gray Hunter had gone with them.

Chicco did not pretend to understand the meaning of all this; but he knew that White Spirit was in trouble, if not in danger, and he was determined to do all he could to help her. The first thing to be done was to follow her, to discover where she was and what she needed.

He followed the trail until he came to the edge of the cliff that bound the ravine. There he looked over at the spot where he supposed, as the others had supposed before him, that Emilie had gone over; but he did not believe that she would or could have descended that cliff of her own will, and he could only conclude that she was dead. As it was night, he did not see the encampment in the glen, and had no reason to think that White Spirit was down there alive.

The moon gave light enough, however, to enable him to see a plain trail of moccasined feet, leading toward the east, and he followed it until it brought him into the broad hollow adjoining the pass at the eastern end of the glen.

He had hardly got into the hollow, when he discovered that it was occupied, and he advanced carefully and noiselessly, concealing himself as he went, in order to ascertain who the occupants were.

A brief inspection satisfied him that they were Apaches, among whom he might safely trust himself, and he rose and walked toward them. As he did so, he was hailed by a camp guard.

"I am Chicco," replied the youth, in answer to the hail. "I have been up into the Apache country, and have just returned. Where is the Gray Hunter?"

"I know nothing about him," said the Apache. "We have come from the plain, and have been here but a little while."

"Why did you come? For what purpose are you here?"

"You know that Corono loves White Spirit, and that he means to make her his wife. He came here with a few warriors, to take her away and carry her to his lodge; but she fled at night, and found her way to this place. She is in the glen yonder, with a band of Coyotes."

"With those white Indians! Is she alive?"

"She was alive and well when Corono saw her."

"How did she get down into the glen?"

"I do not know; but she is there, and the Coyotes would not give her up when Corono demanded her. As they were too many for his party, he sent for us, and we have come to help him."

"There will be a fight, then."

"Yes, and we will take plenty of scalps. Corono means to have the white maiden, and the Coyotes, if they resist, must be wiped out. There are white men right in front of us; but we do not know who they are. We are waiting for daylight, when we can learn something about them, and for the return of a messenger whom we sent to Corono."

"Where is Corono?"

"At the other end of the glen, with many warriors. The Coyotes are shut up, and they must fight or surrender."

Chicco had learned all he wished to know, except the whereabouts of Gray Hunter, and quickly determined upon the course he should pursue. He would slip by the white

men, whoever they might be, and would see White Spirit and help her if she needed help. This was not such a difficult undertaking as might be supposed; for the youth was probably better acquainted with those hills than any other living man, and he knew of a mode of obtaining access to the glen, that some other people would have been glad to know.

He made a small bundle of "lightwood," from some pine knots that the Apaches had collected for fires, and slung it by a cord over his shoulder. Then he crept toward the white men, concealing himself behind the rocks that were thickly strewn in the hollow.

Where the hollow grew more narrow toward the pass that led into the glen, he stopped at a little thicket of bushes and vines at the right, and put the foliage aside, disclosing a small and dark opening into the mountain. But he only looked at it, as if to satisfy himself that it was still there, and turned and crawled toward the encampment of the white men. When he had gone as far as he dared to go, he ensconced himself behind a large boulder, and peered out at the side of his hiding-place, upon the sleeping men who lay on a grassy spot a little below his position.

All were not sleeping. There were two watchful sentinels at the east, and two at the west, and all who were lying down had their weapons at their sides, ready to be snatched up at the first alarm.

There was one, besides the sentinels, who was not sleeping—an old, gray-headed, white-bearded man, who was seated on the ground, with his hands clasped over his knees, gazing into vacancy.

Chicco at once recognized the Gray Hunter, and was not surprised to see him there, knowing that his infirmity would lead him to go with white men as well as with red-men, and that both would treat him with compassion and kindness. As he did not appear to be a prisoner, Chicco would have spoken to him, and would have confided to him his purpose in visiting the glen, had it not been that the white men would be likely to detain him, and that the Gray Hunter might hinder his project rather than help it.

So the youth crept back to the hole in the rock, which he

entered, carefully replacing the bushes so as to conceal the opening. It was a low and narrow passage, and was intensely dark, so dark that he could only find his way by feeling when he was once inside.

Then his lightwood came into play, together with a smoldering brand that he had brought from the Apaches' fire, concealed under his blanket. He blew the coal that still clung to the brand, until the wood was in a blaze, and lighted with it one of his pine knots, which enabled him to make his way without difficulty.

The passage was a hole directly through a point or spur of rock that intervened between Fred Marne's camp and the glen, forming the hypotenuse of a triangle, one side of which was the pass, and the other a cliff that abutted on the glen. In places it was nearly choked up by stones and rubbish, and in others it was quite large and spacious; but its course was generally straight, and its length was some thirty yards.

Shortly before he reached the end of this natural tunnel, Chicco concealed his torch, and went on without a light. The opening at which he made his exit was concealed by a round stone, which he quietly rolled away, and then looked out, to note the position of affairs in the glen.

The Coyotes were mostly wrapped in slumber and in their blankets, with sentinels posted at each entrance, and Chicco took little notice of them, except to observe that they were ready to spring to arms at any moment. His interest was centered in White Spirit, and he soon found her.

Fortunately for his purpose, she was located not far from the opening of the hole through which he had crawled. A blanket was fastened to the cliff by one side, and the other side was pinned to the earth. Under this shelter she lay, the moonlight that struggled down into the glen stealing in just sufficiently to show the white robe that the youth knew so well. There had been no attempt to guard her, as it was considered certain that she could not escape. Several of the Coyotes were sleeping under the overhanging ledge; but the nearest was more than a dozen yards from her shelter, and none of them were between her and Chicco.

The youth crawled around at the base of the cliff, keeping in the shadow of the rocky wall, until he reached her shelter.

He looked in, saw that she was asleep, and hesitated as to how he should awake her.

Pretty soon a dry, harsh rattling was heard near the head of Emilie's couch of blankets, and she started up in affright, looking about as if she expected to be bitten by a snake. Then the rattling was heard just outside the shelter, and she looked in that direction, and saw Chicco standing there, with his finger on his lip. He spoke a few words in the Apach tongue, which he had taught her, and she arose to meet him.

"I was afraid that White Spirit was dead," said he, as he entered the shelter. "I want you to tell me, now, as quickly as you can, and as quietly, what has happened, and why you are here."

"Let my brother listen, and my words shall be few, though I am so glad to see him that I hardly know how to speak. Corono came to take me to his lodge. He said that he could delay no longer, that he meant to make me his wife at once. The Gray Hunter either could not or would not say or do any thing to help me. In fact, I believe that he was willing that the chief should take me. But I had resolved that I would never become the wife of Corono, and I fled at night. I crossed the lake in my canoe, and hastened on, I did not know whither, until I was so tired that I could go no further, and I laid down on the ground to rest.

"I slept, and when I awoke, I did not know where I was. But that was nothing new, as I had not known where I was when I laid down. I wandered on, until I came to this great cliff. I looked down, thinking that I might end all my troubles by throwing myself from the top, when I happened to see a white man far below. I looked more carefully, and saw more of them. I supposed that white men, as a matter of course, must be my friends, and I called to them, but could not make them hear.

"Then I espied a sort of pathway in the rock, and determined to go down. It was a terrible and dangerous way; but I never became dizzy, nor did my courage once fail me. When I had got nearly to the foot of the cliff, I could go no further, and did not know what to do. I would then have fallen, if one of the men had not made his way up and helped me down."

"But my sister is safe now," said Chicco. "She is among her friends, and she is happy."

"I am neither safe nor happy, and I am not among friends. You know what these Coyotes are. They are more cruel and bloodthirsty than any Indians I have ever seen, and I am little better off, if any, than I was before. One of their leaders calls himself my cousin, though I do not own him as such, and I dislike him so much that I almost hate him. He says that he means to make me his wife, and I can not resist him or prevent him from doing whatever he wishes to do. I have no friend but you, Chicco. If you can not help me, there is no hope for me."

Emilie was so moved by her recital of her trials and troubles, that she burst into tears.

"My sister must not cry," said Chicco, soothingly. "Her brother has come to help her, and he *will* help her. Are all white men bad and cruel and mean?"

"Oh, no! There are a great many good white men. There are some with whom I would trust my life and honor at any time and place."

"There are white men here in the hills. I think that they are looking for White Spirit."

"Where are they? If I could go to them I would be so glad! I can hardly do worse than remain here, or fall into the hands of Corono."

"Gray Hunter is with those white men."

"Is he a prisoner? Have they harmed him?"

"They have done him no harm, and he seems to be very well contented. He is not bound or guarded."

"Can I go to him? Can you take me to those white men?"

"Let White Spirit follow her brother, and he will take her to those people."

CHAPTER XIII.

A STRUGGLE FOR WHITE SPIRIT.

THE gray light of dawn was just beginning to tinge the eastern sky, although none of it was visible down in the depths of the glen, when Emilie left her shelter, and followed Chicco, crouching along the base of the cliff, until they reached the passage through which he had come to seek her.

When both were inside the tunnel, Chicco carefully rolled back the stone that concealed the opening, and then went on and kindled a fresh piece of lightwood at his nearly extinguished torch.

Emilie was not at all afraid to follow him into the dark and narrow passage. She was so rejoiced at her escape from Adolphe Cartier and the Coyotes, that there was no room in her breast for fear. When they reached the opening at the other end, the youth parted the brush and vines, making a space through which she could see the camp of the white men.

It was now nearly daylight, and the camp was astir. Emilie saw Gray Hunter as he arose to stretch his cramped limbs, and she wanted to go to him; but Chicco restrained her.

"Wait a little," he said. "Let us see, before we move, what sort of people these are."

They first noticed that there were but few white men in the camp, the majority being Delawares and Shawnees, and the whites acting as leaders. They then observed that Gray Hunter was treated with great respect and deference, rendering it certain that he was not a captive, but a guest who was deemed entitled to consideration.

Emilie gave a start as her eyes rested on a man who arose from the ground and walked toward the side of the hollow. He was a tall, brown-haired, heavy-bearded man, and there was something in his face that was familiar to her. He came closer, and she knew that she could not be mistaken—she recognized Fred Marne.

"Come, Chicco!" she said. "I am safe now. These are my friends. Come with me!"

Before he could hinder her she had darted through the bushes, and was running toward the camp, and he could do nothing but follow her, though he was not certain of the reception he might meet.

Emilie was so overjoyed at meeting a friend, that she took no thought of dignity, or of what Mrs. Grundy might have said if she had been present, but ran at once to Fred Marne, calling him by name and grasping both his hands.

Fred tried to keep his senses, and succeeded pretty well in doing so, though he asked so many questions, and in such rapid succession, that Emilie did not attempt to reply to any of them, until he noticed Chicco, and made an inquiry concerning him.

"This is Chicco," she said. "He is my friend, my brother. It is he who saved me. He brought me out of the glen."

"How, in the name of wonder, did he do that?"

She took him to the thicket, and showed him the hole out of which she and Chicco had crept, and explained to him that it extended through the rock into the glen.

"That is a valuable secret," said Fred, "and we may need to make use of it before we get out of this scrape."

Emilie was then led to the camp, where Gray Hunter manifested the greatest delight at seeing her, and where she was made to relate her adventures, especially those of the past few days.

"It seems that I have been brought here by Providence at the right time," said Marne. "Before I started to search for you in these hills, I saw Pierre Cartier, and told him of my purpose. I offered to allow him to share in the expedition but he treated the project with contempt, and refused to have anything to do with it, and I came with my own friends. I hope that you are safe now; but the Apaches have a large force here, and we are uncertain whether or not they mean to fight us. Can this young Indian be trusted?"

"Trusted! I have told you that he is my friend, my brother, and that he has saved me from the Coyotes. Will you stay with me, Chicco? Will you help me, even against Coronado?"

"Chicco will stay with his sister," replied the youth, "and will help her against Corono or all the Apache warriors. Chicco is only half an Apache, and he had rather die for White Spirit than live for Corono."

"Do you know who this man is?" asked Marne, pointing toward Gray Hunter.

"Of course I do," said Emilie. "He is Gray Hunter, the man who found me on the plain, and who has since sheltered me and taken care of me."

"Do you know that he is a white man?"

"I have understood that he is."

"I am about to surprise you, Miss Latourette. This old man is your father. He is Felix Latourette, who has been believed to be dead."

Emilie *was* surprised. She looked from Marne to Gray Hunter, and from Gray Hunter to Marne, as if unable to comprehend the revelation that had been made to her. She could not understand how it was that she and her father had been almost constantly together during two years, and that the thought of their relationship had never suggested itself to either of them. It was true that she was a mere child when her father was lost, and that his reason was now impaired; but she was a believer in sympathies and antipathies, and no inward monitor had told her that Gray Hunter was her parent.

To the old man the communication appeared to be meaningless, and his mental condition was worse than she had yet known it to be. He was very glad to see White Spirit again, and that was the only emotion he displayed.

A fire had been built in the camp, as usual, and the morning meal had been prepared. When it was ready, Emilie and Chicco were invited to eat, and they accepted the invitation readily enough. Emilie was so rejoiced at having escaped from Corono and the Coyotes, and at having found real friends—at being under the protection of Fred Marne—that her appetite was as hearty as her temper was cheerful. Chicco had lately had very little to eat, and was as hungry as a young bear, and he, also, did justice to the provisions.

Bob Riley, who had been scouting in the hollow, came into camp before breakfast was finished, and his countenance was more serious than it usually was.

"There's no use in blinking at the fact that we are in a scrape," he said, when Marne asked him for a report. "There must be near a hundred red-skins just below us, and those white scoundrels won't let us get through the pass into a better position. The Apaches have been inching their way toward us ever since daylight, and it can't be long before they will make an attack."

"We can get into the glen," suggested Fred. "There is the hole that this boy came out of."

"I suppose we might get through; but I am sure it would not pay. We couldn't all crawl in that hole without being caught at it by the Apaches, and they would be sure to give us trouble. When we got through, we would have the Coyotes to fight, and they would be too many for us. For my part, if we must fight, I had rather 'rastle with the red-skins."

"We are in a trap, without doubt."

"We are *that*, Fred. I believe we can beat off the Apaches, if the other side will let us alone, and I think they will, as this boy tells us that half of Corono's band is at the other end of the glen, and it is likely that they will keep the Coyotes occupied. But we must do more than beat off the red-skins. We must get away from here before we starve for want of water."

"That is true. The water-question is getting to be a serious one. We have but a few drops left. As we have found Miss Latourette, we have no occasion to stay here any longer; but I don't know how we are to make our way out of the scrape."

"Nor I. We can only do our best and take the chances. We had better get to our places, Fred, as the Apaches will soon begin to pitch into us."

After leaving Emilie and her father in a place of safety, in the care of Chicco, who could not be expected to fight against his own people, Fred Marne and his friends quietly took their positions behind a breastwork of stones and brush that had been hastily thrown up, and awaited their assailants. They could soon perceive that the Apaches were gradually approaching them, concealing themselves behind the rocks with which the hollow was crowded, creeping from one point to

another, in order to get near enough to make their fire effective.

"Those reds have got about as far as they ought to go," said Bob Riley, at last. "I think I had better bring them to a halt."

He hailed them, and asked them what they wanted.

Before he could get a reply, a sharp firing was heard at the other end of the glen, which appeared to be a signal for the Apaches to commence the action, as they at once fired a volley of bullets and arrows at the barricade. Their fire was carelessly delivered, however, and had no effect, except to make their enemies wary.

Only now and then was a shot sent from the barricade, at some Apache who incautiously exposed a portion of his person, and who paid the penalty for his carelessness or temerity. Bob Riley had ordered his party to reserve their fire for the grand rush, which must come soon.

It could not, in fact, be long delayed, if the Apaches meant to fight. The occasional but deadly fire of their enemies prevented them from advancing any further by gradual approaches, and it was necessary to go on like a whirlwind, or to retreat out of the way of harm.

The Apaches had no thought of retiring. A general yell was the signal for a general discharge of all their weapons, and that was followed by a simultaneous rush at the barricade. They had yet a considerable space to pass over before reaching their enemies, and that distance was fatal to many of them. The rifles behind the barricade, leveled with deadly aim, flashed out a stream of fire that laid low the foremost braves, and put an end to their yelling forever.

But they showed more method and sagacity in their assault than are usually seen in Indian attacks. When the rifles cracked, a number of them had thrown themselves upon the ground, or had availed themselves of the shelter of the rocks, and the bullets passed them by unharmed. As soon as the volley had been delivered, they rushed forward with wild yells, and threw themselves against the barricade in a torrent that could hardly be resisted.

It was resisted, bravely and bloodily. The repeating rifles of Fred Marne and Dr. Ray, with the pistols of Riley

and Spann and a portion of the Delawares, then came into play, and the Apaches fell in heaps before they reached the rude rampart. But many of them did reach it, and they went on and over it, until they were fairly within the camp of the white men, where the struggle became desperate and deadly.

Hand to hand and foot to foot the combatants fought and struggled, with clubbed rifles and hatchets and knives, and even with fists and teeth and nails. In this close encounter the white men and their allies were at a disadvantage in point of numbers, and their superior weapons were not available. Several of them had fallen, and their defeat and massacre seemed certain, when a new and unexpected ally appeared upon the scene.

It was Gray Hunter, who had been watching the fight with a vacant stare, until he was aroused by Emilie's exclamations of fear and grief and sympathy with her friends.

Then he started up, seized the spear of a fallen Indian, and rushed into the midst of the combatants, forcing back the Apaches with his muscular efforts, as well as with his voice and gestures. As they recognized him, they drew back in a body, and the yells and shouts and curses of the conflict gave place to his commanding, clear, almost unearthly tones.

"Children of the mountain! what do you do here?" he exclaimed. "Do you think that you can slay those who are protected by the Great Spirit? Do you know me? I am the Gray Hunter, who was sent to you from the far land, and these are my friends. These are not the Coyotes, whom Corono sent you to kill, and you are throwing away your lives in a manner that will not please your chief. Go back to your camp, and bury your dead and take care of your wounded, and the white men shall talk and smoke with you, and you shall go your way, and they shall go theirs."

Silently and submissively the Apaches retired beyond the barricade, unmolested by their late antagonists, who were glad enough to get rid of them. The unexpected appearance of Gray Hunter had in it something of the supernatural, and they had no thought of disobeying his directions.

There had been, during this engagement, such an amount of firing and yelling as indicated a severe fight in the glen and at the other end of the ravine; but the sounds ceased

soon after the conclusion of a truce between the belligerents at the eastern end.

Bob Riley well knew that their battle with Corono had prevented the Coyotes from paying attention to Fred Marne and his party, and he feared that they might, if they had got one enemy off their hands, begin to search for another, in the hope of finding Emilie, whose escape must have long since been discovered. He was, therefore, anxious to make peace with the Apaches in front, and to get away with Emilie and her father.

The talk that Gray Hunter had proposed was held, and was presided over by himself. He assured the Apache warriors that it was the Coyotes whom Corono had sent them to punish, and that Fred Marne and his party did not wish to block their way to their enemies. The pipe of amity was smoked, and a treaty was concluded, by which the white men and their allies were to be permitted to pass through the Apache camp and go away unmolested, and the Apaches were to take their place at the entrance to the glen.

As soon as this result was made known, Chicco carried into effect a plan which he had been preparing. The Apaches knew, as he was well aware, that it was the object of Corono to get possession of White Spirit. It would not be safe for her to be seen by them, as the discovery of her presence would at once destroy the treaty, because the Apaches would not permit her to depart.

When he explained this difficulty to her, she readily consented that he should attempt to disguise her as a Delaware warrior, and he succeeded admirably in the attempt, although it was impossible to make her look ugly. He painted her face and hands with pigments that the warriors always carried, and made her put on a few articles of apparel that he had stripped from a dead Indian. Then he concealed her shining hair by covering her head with a blanket, and soon had a litter made, in which she was to be carried, as a wounded warrior, by two of the Delawares.

CHAPTER XIV.

APACHE AND COYOTE.

It was not long after Emilie left the glen, that Adolphe Jartier discovered that she had escaped. As he had believed it to be impossible that she should get away, it was not on that account that he visited her shelter soon after he awoke. The Coyotes prepared a very early breakfast that morning, as it was probable that they would have their hands full of work during the day, and the work was expected to commence as soon as there was light enough to begin it. Adolphe carried her breakfast to her, and expected to be the first to greet her when he approached her shelter.

She was not there.

Surprise would be no expression for the utter consternation that seized him when he made this discovery.

Thinking it possible that she might be concealed somewhere in the vicinity, he looked about for her; but she was not visible. He called her; but she did not answer.

He made inquiries among the men who had slept near her shelter; but they had not seen her since she entered it, had heard no suspicious sounds, and knew nothing concerning her.

He at once caused search to be made in all parts of the glen; but the closest examination failed to discover her or any trace of her. Chicco had been careful to lead her over rocks and stony ground, so that not the slightest trail was left. A bloodhound might possibly have tracked her; but there was not even a cur in the camp of the Coyotes.

The sentinels at each end of the ravine were questioned. They had seen nothing of Emilie, and it was simply impossible that she could have gone out at either of the passes without their knowledge. There was no chance for even a monkey to climb the cliffs, except at the place where she had descended. Adolphe's lariat was hanging where he had left it; but he was forced to confess that he would not dare to attempt the ascent by daylight, much less would any woman be able

to make it in the night-time. There might be traitors in the camp; but there was no one on whom his suspicions could rest. He only knew that she had gone, "and made no sign."

As he was fretting and storming through the camp, he met his father, who, as escape was considered out of the question, was permitted to wander about at his will. Although he had heard of the disappearance of Emilie, the old man was malicious enough to ask his son what was the matter.

"Matter enough," angrily replied Adolphe. "Emilie has got out and gone."

"Gone! Where can she have gone to?"

"I can't guess, unless you have murdered and buried her."

"It is more likely that she has murdered herself, to escape from your clutches. You have brought me here to my death, also. The Indians are closing in upon us, and they will make a massacre of all in this place. What do you expect to do to save yourselves?"

"You will soon see. They will not find it an easy matter to wipe us out."

As Adolphe spoke, a wild yell arose at the western end of the ravine, followed by the rattle of musketry and the shouts of combatants. Almost at the same moment similar sounds were heard at the eastern end, in which direction Adolphe hastened. He soon perceived that all was safe in that quarter, as the Apaches had come into collision with Fred Marne's party, and they would mutually distract each other's attention from his own men. Satisfied upon this point, he took most of the men who were stationed there, and carried them to the other end, to assist Ben Hincks in making head against the main attack.

Neither Hincks nor any of the Coyotes believed that the Apaches could make their way through the narrow pass that formed the western entrance to the glen, as a few resolute men could defend it against a largely superior force. But they had not calculated upon the ferocity of the attack that would be made when their foes were led by Corono himself.

The young chief was wild to gain possession of White Spirit. During a long time he had forced himself to wait, though not with patience, submitting to her will and to the will of Gray Hunter, although he knew that she was en-

tirely in his power and that he could do as he pleased in the matter.

When he had come to the conclusion that it was beneath his dignity as a great chief to be trifled with any longer, and had determined to take her to his lodge, she fled from him. This raised his indignation to a high pitch; but his anger was still more fierce when he discovered that she had taken refuge among the Coyotes, who refused to give her up. He resolved to punish them for their presumption, to wipe out the band, to utterly exterminate them.

It was this feeling on his part, which he had infused into his followers, that made the attack so desperate and so hard to resist. The pass was very narrow, it is true; but the Apaches were not afraid to die, and were willing to sacrifice themselves for their chief. The first who rushed into the pass fell before the murderous fire of the Coyotes; but those who were behind climbed over the fallen, or used their bodies as a breastwork to aid the attack. Others swarmed up the steep sides of the cliffs, where a cat could hardly get a foothold, and gained positions from which they could annoy their enemies.

The Coyotes stood to their work manfully, and piled the pass with dead Apaches. Their assailants, however, fought so desperately that it seemed certain that the assault would succeed. Corono himself rushed forward to lead the way, and his braves were nearly through the pass when a fire in the rear attracted their attention, and gave the Coyotes such an advantage that the Apaches were driven back to their camp.

This fire in the rear had been the work of Jed Barnes and his party. Taking advantage of the fact that the Apaches were engaged in the attack on the pass, they had sallied out, and sent a volley into the mass. Before the Apaches could recover from their surprise and turn upon them, they had fired another volley, and then they retreated in safety to their stronghold in the side of the cliff.

Hincks and the Coyotes, fully aware that they had been upon the eve of defeat, from which they had been saved only by the unexpected assistance of some unknown allies, perceived that they must make an effort to change the position

of affairs, as it was more than possible that they might not again be able to repulse the Apaches.

As it was Emilie Latourette that Corono wanted, it was supposed that he would be willing to abandon the attack upon the Coyotes when he should be informed that she had made her escape. It was resolved, therefore, to call a truce and endeavor to make a treaty of peace, and for this purpose a white flag—a signal which was always recognized by the savages, though not always respected—was advanced into the pass.

Corono came forward with two of his warriors to meet the flag, and they were faced by Ben Hincks, accompanied by Adolphe Cartier and Dick Starrup. The talk was between these delegations, the best riflemen on each side standing near, with leveled weapons, ready for a collision if any symptom of treachery should be manifested.

The talk did not turn out as the Coyotes had hoped it would. Corono positively refused to believe the statement that Emilie had escaped, that it was no longer in the power of the gang to produce her.

"You may have hidden White Spirit," he said, "or you may have got her out of the way in some other manner; but she is still in your power, and you can bring her forward if you wish to. You must give me White Spirit, or I will take your scalps. There is nothing else to be said."

"We haven't got the girl," insisted Hincks. "Let the chief come in and see for himself. He may come with three or four warriors, and may search wherever he wishes to search, and we will give him our word that he shall go back in safety."

"Your word!" contemptuously exclaimed Corono, who looked upon this proposition as an attempt to lead him, with some of his best men, into a trap. "Your word is not worth a bunch of dead grass. Bring forward White Spirit, and give her to me, or your scalps shall dry in the smoke of Apache lodges."

Hincks and Cartier argued and entreated, but in vain. The Apache was inflexible, and the talk came to an end. Both sides returned to their own limits, the one to prepare for attack, and the other to prepare for defense.

The attack came very soon, and was yet more savage and determined than the first had been. Several of Corono's braves had contrived to scale the cliffs at the pass, and had prepared to hurl a quantity of missiles upon the heads of their adversaries. When the Coyotes rushed forward to meet the warriors who were dashing impetuously into the pass, they were met by a shower of stones and masses of rock that were poured down upon them from the cliffs, and were forced to retire out of the reach of these missiles.

In the pass the warriors redoubled their exertions, and soon, with yells of triumph, burst through into the glen, where they renewed the fight on better ground and more advantageous terms.

At this juncture Jed Barnes, as if he had been placed in the rear of the savages for that special purpose, again brought his detachment into service.

The Apaches, when they moved forward to the second attack, had left a body of warriors to watch the stronghold of Jed Barnes, and he had been afraid to venture out, lest his retreat, if he should again be obliged to retreat, should be cut off. But this force, when the main body burst triumphantly into the glen, was seized with an impulse to follow and share the triumph. One after another the warriors slipped away and darted through the pass; until, at last, all who were left caught the infection, and dashed off toward the supposed scene of scalp-taking.

Jed Barnes, who had been expecting such a movement, and had held his followers in readiness to take advantage of it, at once descended from his stronghold, and hastened toward the pass. Hardly had the Apaches in front of him made their entrance into the glen, joining their yells to those of their comrades, when he was right at their backs, and poured into them such a fire as had decided the fate of the first assault.

The Apaches were both surprised and frightened at finding themselves between the fires of two bodies of white men, whose number now nearly equaled their own. Barnes took advantage of this moment of fright and hesitation, to break through their ranks where their warriors were fewest, and to effect a junction with Hincks' men, who were rejoiced to receive the reinforcement.

The Coyotes had been maintaining the fight against odds, and had become badly discouraged. Struggling desperately, they had slowly fallen back, determined to sell their scalps as dearly as possible. The arrival of Jed Barnes and his party at once revived their hopes and changed the scene. There was no time for greetings or congratulations. With a wild and joyful shout, the combined parties poured in a murderous fire, and then charged upon the Apaches, with pistols and knives, scattering them like a flock of black-birds.

This, the moment of triumph for the white men, was also their moment of weakness. The men who came with Barnes had been for hours suffering the tortures of thirst. Their suffering continued until the Apaches broke, when, unable to endure it any longer, they all rushed, as if guided by instinct, to the ice-cold spring at the foot of the cliff.

It was while they were engaged in quenching their thirst, that a new element was introduced into the scene.

The Apaches at the eastern end of the ravine had been quiet since the termination of the first attack. It was supposed that Marne and his party would be sufficient to keep them back; but Hincks had judged it proper to retain a strong guard at the pass there. At one time, when he needed help, he would have withdrawn the guard, if the ominous silence of the Apaches had not given him increased uneasiness.

It was at the moment of their triumph, when their enemies were flying before them in all directions, that the Coyotes were startled by the renewal of the firing at the eastern pass. They were soon aware, also, that Marne and his party were not concerned in this new affair, that it was between the Apaches and their own men.

Hincks was not troubled by this development, believing that the guard was strong enough to hold the pass, and it *was* strong enough, as the attack was merely a feint, to cover a far more important and threatening enterprise.

Just then a number of red-men might have been seen, and shortly were seen, emerging from a hole at the foot of the cliff. They came out silently, but not at all slowly, and kept together at that place as they came out, until their pre-

sence attracted the attention of the whites; when they sounded their battle-cry, and rushed to the assistance of their defeated friends.

This last arrival decided the fortunes of the day. The Coyotes, finding themselves unexpectedly assailed by superior numbers of fresh men, were stricken with a panic, and most of them thought only of flight. More than half of those who hurried to the spring had injured themselves by pouring large quantities of cold water into their heated bodies, and were hardly capable of any exertion. The guard at the eastern pass, suddenly attacked in the rear, fled in terror and confusion, leaving the pass open for the rest of the Apaches to enter.

A scene of massacre ensued. The Coyotes, disorganized and scattered, fought singly or in groups, surrounded by superior numbers, or fled in any direction that offered a chance of escape. Whichever plan they attempted, they were almost sure to perish ultimately.

In their eagerness to secure the scalps of their victims, the Apaches had neglected to cut off their retreat by placing guards at the passes, and some of the white men were thus enabled to escape from the ravine. But these, also, were pursued by the savages, not yet sated with blood.

CHAPTER XV.

A WRONG REVENGED.

As soon as Emilie's disguise was completed, and her litter was prepared, Fred Marne's party set out to leave the ravine. Emilie had been so well concealed during the attack, that she had not been seen by the Apaches, and her disguise, thanks to the forethought and skill of Chicco, was so perfect that there was no danger that she would be recognized.

Gray Hunter, too, was ready for the run. His mind, with the exception of his memory, seemed to be clear and strong again.

They went through the Apache camp without hindrance. Some scowling glances were cast upon them; but not a threatening word was spoken. Some of the braves looked inquisitively at the litter; but Emilie was well covered from view, and no questions were asked. A warrior, who appeared to be a man of authority, accosted Gray Hunter, and asked him whither he was going.

"Gray Hunter goes to his lodge by the wonderful lake," replied the old man, "to consult the Great Spirit, and to ask him to help the Apaches while they are warring with dogs."

No effort was made to detain him, and there could be no doubt that the influence of his presence and his manner had not only caused the Apaches to consent to the peace, but had prevented them from breaking it.

The party had not got out of sight of the Apache encampment when shouts and shots in and about the glen told them that the struggle between the Coyotes and Apaches had recommenced. The little party made all the more haste to leave the hollow, as the nearer firing and louder yells told them that the battle was becoming fiercer and more deadly.

But where was Chicco? He was not with them, that was certain, for he made no response to call or signal.

"Perhaps he was unwilling to go through the Apache camp, and will follow us by some other route," suggested Marne.

"That ain't what's the matter with the youngster," said Bob Riley. "He has got enough of the Apache in him to want to help his people against those cussed Coyotes, and I'm keen to swear that he has stayed behind to show them the way through that hole."

Riley's conjecture was correct. Chicco had concealed himself among the rocks until the white men's party got clear at the hollow, and had then come out among the Apaches, as if he had been in hiding all the while. When the fighting was renewed, and the Indians were anxious to force their way through the pass into the glen, he showed them the hole in the rock, and gave them directions for crawling through and getting in the rear of the Coyotes.

Having accomplished this object, and being unwilling to remain any longer away from White Spirit, the youth took

"short-cut" up the mountain, and rejoined Marne's party. He volunteered no explanation of his absence, and no questions were asked him; but the results of his action could be seen from the position which the party had then reached. They were, in fact, where they could look down into the glen, and the portions of the battle-field which they were able to see presented a terrible spectacle. The white men were fighting or flying for their lives, and were being struck down in all directions; while the Apaches, making the place hideous with their yells, were rioting in massacre and going wild over the scalps of their fallen foes.

As the victory of the Apaches could not fail to add to their own peril, the fugitives lost no time in making their way to the lake, where a brief halt was had for consultation.

Fred Marne and Dr. Ray were in favor of continuing their flight down the mountain; but this was strongly opposed by the more experienced Riley.

"The red-skins may be tired," said Captain Bob; "but they won't be too tired to catch us. They will never stop while they are on the track of scalps, and it would be a bad thing for us if they should overhaul us while we are getting down the mountain. If there must be another fight, we had better pick the ground ourselves, and take all the advantage we can get."

It was decided to make a stand on the rocky shelf where they had made their first camp in the mountain. A spot was selected where both flanks were guarded from attack by natural impediments, canteens and all available utensils were filled with water, a sort of fortification was thrown up, and the party proceeded to cook and eat dinner, as if there was no more danger to be apprehended.

Gray Hunter noted these preparations in silence. He was seated in the shade of the ledge that rose on one side of the shelf, with White Spirit near him, and was so absorbed in her presence that he seemed to care for nothing else. Chicco was also there, well pleased to listen as she thanked him for having preserved her from a great peril.

The first use that Corono made of his victory was to institute a search for White Spirit. Every white man who fell into or under the hands of the Apaches was commanded to

reveal her hiding place ; but the same response was made by all who were able and willing to speak. She had escaped, they said ; they did not know whither she had gone ; they were as much at a loss as the Apaches were.

Pierre Cartier was one of the first who escaped through the pass with the advice and assistance of Jed Barnes, who exercised the shrewdness peculiar to his race, and slipped away with three of his friends. A few of the Coyotes, under the leadership of Dick Starrup, also got away from the glen ; but all these fugitives were pursued by the Apaches, and fear gave speed to their feet as they fled from the infuriated red-skins.

The howls of the human bloodhounds, as they kept the trail of the fugitives, were borne to the ears of Fred Marne and his party, and caused them to hasten their preparations for resisting the Apaches.

They had built a formidable breastwork across the shelf, when Pierre Cartier came in sight, climbed over the pile of stones, and fell on the rocks exhausted. Directly after him came Jed Barnes and his three men, who were also out of breath. Then Dick Starrup and Sam Skeggs appeared in view—the last of the Coyotes. Close behind these two came the pursuing Apaches—so close that Gus Spann was obliged to call for volunteers to go out and beat off the Indians before they could secure two more victims.

Barnes and Starrup, with the other men, were kindly and even gladly received. As they had retained their weapons, they could be of service in the expected conflict. No one even spoke to Pierre Cartier, who arose from his recumbent position, and looked ruefully about him, as if he feared that he had not fallen among friends.

He was noticed by one person. As he arose to his feet, the eyes of Gray Hunter were fixed upon him, and were filled with a lurid fire that spoke of recognition and deadly purpose.

For the moment the old man was no longer Gray Hunter, but Felix Latourette. The memory of an ancient wrong flashed upon him, and at the instant and for the instant his whole being was changed.

He started up, and sprung upon Cartier with the leap of a panther. The force of his onward rush was such that it car-

ried both men toward the cliff, and they fell, rolling and struggling, at the edge of the perilous chasm, Latourette's long and sinewy fingers clutching the throat of his cousin in a death-grasp.

Before any one could interfere to separate or rescue them, they rolled over and disappeared!

At the same moment the pursuing Indians, baffled of their expected prey, made a rush at the breastwork, and the rifles of the white men were called into requisition to resist their attack. The Apaches were at once driven back, with the loss of nearly half their number. The survivors were then content to be quiet until the arrival of the rest of the band, when they established themselves in such cover as they could find, and kept their adversaries annoyed, by their rifle and arrow practice, until darkness put an end to all operations.

All through the night the white men kept a good guard, and stood to their arms, expecting to be again attacked by the Apaches, whose numbers, notwithstanding their losses, were still greater than their own; but they were not molested until morning.

Just as day was breaking, the Indians made a furious attack upon the breastwork with their entire force, but found their enemies ready to meet them. The deadly fire of the rifles melted them away as they approached, and few of them got within striking distance of the pile of rocks.

This style of reception was too severe for them, and they fell back in a hurry. It was with great difficulty that they were able to carry off their wounded, and they were obliged to leave some of their dead that lay near the position of the white men.

Before the sun was three hours high, the Apaches had entirely disappeared.

None of the white men had seen Corono during the fight. If he had been present, he would surely have led the assaults, and his absence accounted for the apparent ease with which the Apaches were beaten off.

Corono would never lead an assault again. He was lying cold in the glen of the Coyotes.

Weary of slaughter, he had again commenced to search for White Spirit, whom he believed to be somewhere in the

vicinity. He continued his search when the warriors had left the glen, in pursuit of the few white men who had escaped.

In the course of his investigation, he came upon the body of Adolphe Cartier, who had been mortally wounded, but was not yet dead, and who, having fallen into a hollow, had not been perceived by the Apache scalp-hunters.

As the eyes of Corono fell on the Coyote leader, they gleamed with hatred and triumph. He drew his knife, and rushed forward to secure the scalp of his foe.

His motions were watched by Adolphe, who, although he feigned to be dead, gripped a cocked pistol in his right hand, and had collected his fast-failing energies to make his aim sure.

As the Apache bent over his victim, the pistol was quickly raised and fired. The bullet struck him in the center of the forehead, and he fell backward without a word. His earthly career was ended, and the soul of his slayer passed away almost at the same moment.

CHAPTER XVI.

A WEIGHT THROWN OFF.

WHEN the Apaches had disappeared, Bob Riley headed a scouting party to ascertain whether they had really gone. Their trail was followed back to the glen of the Coyotes, where they were discovered in the act of burying their dead and lamenting over Corono. The scouts were of the opinion that they would make no more hostile attempts, but would return to their own country when they had finished the work they had in hand.

There was nothing, then, to hinder Fred Marne from descending to the foot of the cliff and looking after Mr. Latour-ette and his antagonist. Taking with him Dr. Ray and several other men, he left the camp for that purpose.

Emilie, who had washed off the pigments with which Chicco had stained her face and hands, and had resumed her own garments, was anxious to accompany them, and was permitted to go.

By a circuitous and difficult route, they reached the foot of the cliff, and looked up with horror at the height from which the two men had fallen. Emilie was kept back as they went forward to view the bodies.

Greatly to their surprise, Mr. Latourette was still living. Impossible as it appeared to be, the lightning *had* struck twice in the same place. Pierre Cartier was dead and cold. His body was terribly mangled, and his face was crushed out of all resemblance to the human countenance. But Mr. Latourette, though badly bruised, had no severe hurts that were visible, and Dr. Ray said that his real injuries, if he had any, were internal. He was breathing when they found him, but was otherwise insensible, and was lying across the body of Pierre Cartier, with his eyes closed and his hands clenched.

The body of the dead man was buried near the spot where he had fallen, and a litter was made, on which Mr. Latourette was carried to the camp.

"It was no more than right that the old man should be the death of that chap," said Sam Skeggs, when he was informed that Pierre Cartier was dead and buried, "because Cartier was the man who sot the Apaches onto him. He paid them well to git arter the old man and kill him, and this is the place whar they pitched in. You mought think that some of us who war with him had a hand in the business; but we hadn't, and the Apaches went for all of us."

By the efforts of the doctor Mr. Latourette was gradually revived, and was at length able to sit up and open his eyes. As he did so, he looked wildly about him, with a wondering, puzzled expression. Then he recognized Gus Spann, and spoke to him.

"Where are the rest of the boys, Gus? Did we whip the Indians? Who are all these people? What woman is that at my side?"

"I am Emilie, your daughter!" exclaimed that young lady, as she seized his hand and covered it with kisses.

"What nonsense! My Emilie is a mere child, and is far from here. You are a grown woman. And yet, there is a resemblance. I don't understand this business. Have you stripped a red-skin to give me his clothes? What does it all mean?"

It was a long time before he could be made to fully understand his condition. When he at last appreciated the fact that many years of his life had been a blank, and that he had taken up his existence where he left it off many years ago, he was greatly troubled, and turned to Emilie for consolation and comfort. He found both in her care and affection.

Dr. Ray was of the opinion that he would live, but could not say how long he might survive. He had sustained internal injuries, the nature and extent of which could not be determined. At the same time, his brain had received a shock, which had in some manner counteracted the effect of the previous shock, and had restored to him his reason.

It surprised the doctor greatly to perceive that the old man improved rapidly. The next morning he was able to walk, and the party moved down to the foot of the mountain, to the place where the horses had been left.

They determined to remain here until it was certain that the old man could travel with safety, and set at work to make a fortified camp. A careful watch was kept for Indians; but they were not molested, and had reason to believe that the Apaches had entirely left the neighborhood.

During the fourth day that they passed in this encampment, Mr. Latourette was very restless, and acted so strangely that his friends were compelled to believe that he was not yet in his right mind. It was deemed proper that a watch should be set upon him, and Fred Marne and Sam Skeggs stood guard that night at the shelter tent under which he slept.

At midnight he crept out of the shelter, and stealthily crawled away, followed at a distance by his guards. He passed out of the camp, and walked slowly among the bushes and trees, looking about as if searching for some spot that was dimly outlined in his memory, until he reached a peculiar pointed rock, when he stopped and began to dig in the ground with a knife that he had concealed in his clothing.

"I know what he is arter, Mr. Marne," said Skeggs. "Ef you will wait here and watch him, I will run back to the camp and git suthin' to dig with."

When Skeggs returned with a spade, the old man had struck "pay dirt," and was digging furiously, throwing gold and silver coins out of the hole he had made.

"It's his *cache*," said the ex-Coyote—"the one he made when we came into the hills. "Thar's two mule-loads of gold and silver buried thar, and we must help him dig it up."

When the old man saw the two guards approaching the place where he was at work, he was at first frightened, and was then glad to see them. His conversation showed that his mind was clearer and stronger than it had been since his collision with Pierre Cartier.

"There has been a weight on my head during several days," he said, when they asked him what had caused him to remember the *cache*. "I did not know what it was—only knew that I was troubled—but I know now. That weight is thrown off, and I feel more natural and at ease."

The gold and silver coins were in a heap, nothing but a few rotten shreds being left of the canvas bags in which they had been packed. When Fred Marne and Skeggs had assisted him to take out the treasure and put it in two piles, more help was brought from the camp, and it was carried to a place of safety.

The next two days were spent in rejoicing, not only at the discovery of the buried gold and silver, but also at Mr. Latourette's recovery from his mental disorder. Although he was still weak in body, his intellect was active and unclouded. He had a remarkably clear recollection of the events of his life before his capture, and remembered many incidents of his existence among the Indians. He took much pleasure in relating these, and in listening to Emilie's account of his adventures. He did not express the slightest regret for the death of Pierre Cartier, or for his own agency in that tragedy. It was the judgment of God upon a wicked man, he said, and he felt that he was not responsible for the manner in which his instrumentality had been used.

As soon as he was able to ride a horse, the party was divided. The Delawares and Shawnees were paid the wages that had been promised them, and received some presents in addition to their pay. They took a really affectionate farewell of their white friends, and went toward the north-east, highly pleased with their treatment.

The white people, after providing meat and water for the journey, took the southern route, and in due time arrived at

El Paso, where Mr. Latourette found some old friends, who welcomed him as one risen from the dead. Dick Starrup and Sam Skeggs, who had reasons of their own for not wishing to venture among the Mexican population just then, were left at a convenient hiding-place on the way, until their peace could be made with the authorities, or they could be forwarded to Texas.

On the route to El Paso, as well as during the days they had spent in the camp at the foot of the mountains, Fred Marne had made good use of his opportunities, and had vigorously laid siege to a heart that was glad to surrender to him. The result was that he waited on Mr. Latourette, after his arrival at El Paso, and asked the honor of Emilie's hand in marriage, and the old gentleman very graciously granted his request, only stipulating that he should not be separated from his daughter during the remainder of his life.

When the estate of Pierre Cartier was settled, it was found to be not more than sufficient to cover the amount of his cousin's property which he had appropriated, and Mr. Latourette had no scruples in taking possession of it as it stood. The place near El Paso was sold, and it appeared, to the surprise of some people, that the woman Pepita was rich enough to purchase and pay for it.

When this business was settled, Fred Marne and Emilie were married, and went to California with Mr. Latourette and Chicco. Fred established himself at a beautiful residence on the coast, where he still lives happily with his increasing family.

Mr. Latourette survived a few years after the removal to California, and finally died of the effects of the injuries received in the mountains.

Chicco's home is with White Spirit and her husband, by whom he is allowed all possible privileges, and his fame as a hunter is unequalled in that region.

THE END.

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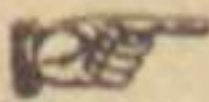
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